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# Daily Report

# Near East & South Asia

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# Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

*FBIS-NES-96-096* *16 May 1996*

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## Palestinian Affairs

### Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, Saddam Reportedly Talk on Telephone

*MM1605113196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 May 96 p 2*

[Report by Mufid 'Awad in Amman: "Telephone Conversation Between 'Arafat and Saddam; al-Qadisiyah Forces Start Transfer to Gaza"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Informed Palestinian sources in Amman have said that, for the first time since the last Gulf war, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has had a telephone conversation with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the call was made after Mahmud Isma'il, the Arab Liberation Front [ALF's] representative, resigned from the PLO Executive Committee despite enjoying 'Arafat's support.

The sources said that 'Arafat briefed Saddam on the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. The 'Arafat-Saddam telephone conversation also addressed Palestinian-Iraqi relations. The sources see a link between this telephone conversation and the transfer, the day before yesterday, of part of the "Palestine Liberation Army — al-Qadisiyah forces" from Iraq to the Palestinian Authority's areas via the King Husayn bridge over the Jordan.

The Palestinian sources revealed that 'Arafat has stressed the need for the oil-for-food deal to succeed, as this would mean that Iraq is about to come out of its isolation and resume its political role.

According to these sources, Iraqi officials close to the Iraqi-sponsored ALF advised its leadership not to oppose the Palestinian leadership on the negotiations with the Israeli side, which would explain the fact that ALF cadres and leaders attended the recent Palestine National Council meetings in Gaza, during which it was agreed to amend some of the Palestinian national charter's clauses. [passage omitted]

### Palestinian Affairs: Adviser Cites 'Arafat on Noninterference in Israeli Polls

*JN1605073596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 16 May 96*

[Report by Khalil Abu-'Arab in Nabulus]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat received Dr. Aleksey Chistyakov, Russia's representative to the National Authority, at his place of residence in Nabulus Governorate last night. [passage omitted]

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to the president, said that the president's visit to Nabulus is part of a tour of the West Bank Governorates. He said that the president will today receive a number of popular and national delegations and will meet with military and civilian officials. Abu-Rudaynah said the president will today leave Nabulus for Ramallah, where he will meet with various personalities.

Abu-Rudaynah said the president expressed appreciation for the Saudi support for the Palestinian people, noting that Saudi Arabia is the only country that did not halt its support to our Palestinian people. During his meetings, the president spoke about the Israeli elections, asserting that the Palestinian side will not interfere in the Israeli elections. He pointed out that a peace agreement was signed with the Israeli Government and that we, as Palestinians, are eager to see an Israeli government that will support the peace process come to power.

The president praised the active Egyptian role vis-a-vis the Palestinian question and the peace process. He also commended the clear Jordanian position, which supports the rights of our Palestinian people.

Regarding the makeup of the cabinet, Abu-Rudaynah said that the ministerial portfolios were not allocated yet. He said he expects the policy statement to be presented and the portfolios allocated within seven to 10 days.

### Palestinian Affairs: Summit Participants Reportedly Agree on Security Committee

*JN1505185196 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 14 May 96 pp 1, 30*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat returned to Gaza yesterday after participating in a summit with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan in Cairo on 12 May. PLO sources told AL-ITTIHAD that a number of agreements were reached during the tripartite summit. Among these is an agreement to form a security committee to draw up plans to prevent attacks against Israel during the Palestinian final status negotiations. [passage omitted]

In Cairo, PLO sources told AL-ITTIHAD that the tripartite summit adopted decisions on cooperation and coordination that were not announced in the summit's final statement. Foremost among these is a decision to form a tripartite security committee to draw up plans and strategies to prevent any attacks against Israel by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], Islamic Jihad, and others so that the final status Palestinian-Israeli negotiations will not obstructed.

The sources added that the three leaders agreed that Egypt and Jordan will ask other Arab countries to help

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meet the Palestinians' financial and economic needs. The two countries will contact other Arab countries this week to urge them to expedite financial and economic aid to the Palestinian Authority, especially in light of the serious security situation in the self-rule areas and the shortage of basic commodities in Palestine, which requires that urgent aid be offered within a maximum of 20 days. The sources said that King Husayn and President 'Arafat directly asked the Egyptian president to mediate to improve relations with Syria and Lebanon and to entrench the important principle of noninterference in each other's domestic affairs. The results of Egyptian mediation will be discussed during the next tripartite summit in Amman in June. [passage omitted]

**Palestinian Affairs: Jordan Reportedly Turns Down 'Arafat Confederation Proposal**

*TA1505165996 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 14 May 96 pp 1, 23*

["Exclusive" to AL-QUDS]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman, INTERMEDIA — A senior Palestinian official has described the results of the tripartite Cairo summit among Jordan's King Husayn, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat as being equal in importance to the resolutions of the Rabat summit of 1974 which affirmed official and collective Arab recognition — on the summit level — of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian official, who preferred to remain anonymous, told AL-QUDS that the tripartite summit brought coordination among its parties to an institutional level by setting up a permanent follow-up committee on the level of foreign ministers and by deciding to meet again in Amman at the beginning of June.

The official added that the Jordanian monarch managed to dispel the fears of the Palestinian president about the Jordanian role in the upcoming final solution talks and arrangements relating to the Palestinian problem, especially on the issue of Jerusalem, which has aroused controversy in the past few days.

The official said that the talks deviated from the norm by dealing frankly with concerns and suspicions when King Husayn told 'Arafat that he will not be a substitute for the National Authority and will not allow any party, meaning Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], to undermine it. King Husayn also said that Jordan will participate in the final status talks only if it is asked by the Palestinians, bearing in mind that some topics on the agenda of the negotiations concern both Jordan and Palestine, particularly the issues of the refugees, the displaced, borders, and water.

An authorized Jordanian source said that during the tripartite Cairo summit Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat presented the confederation plan to Jordan's King Husayn.

The source added that the Jordanian side expressed reservations about determining the relationship between Jordan and Palestine before the results of the final solution talks under way between Israel and Palestine.

The same source said that King Husayn told 'Arafat: "Keep it in your pocket," in reference to the confederation plan. This was the second time that 'Arafat proposed the confederation plan to Jordan and the second time that the Jordanian monarch told him to keep it in his pocket. Political circles interpreted the Palestinian proposal and the Jordanian reservation as an endeavor by 'Arafat to obtain a document of "international law" standards recognizing his Palestinian state, because a confederation is an alliance between two independent states. [passage omitted]

**Palestinian Affairs: PNC Speaker Views Session, Dissident Factions, Closure**

*NC1605095196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0700 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 16 May (MENA)— Palestine National Council [PNC] Speaker Salim al-Za'nun, who is currently in Damascus to attend Arab Parliamentary Union meetings, has praised the recent summit held in Cairo among President Husni Mubarak, Jordan's King Husayn, and President Yasir 'Arafat. He described the summit as a very important step to back the Palestinian side in the final settlement negotiations that opened in Taba on 4 May.

In an interview with MENA, al-Za'nun emphasized: We need the Arabs' backing in the final settlement talks, especially on Jerusalem, settlements, borders, and refugees.

He noted that each of these topics undoubtedly entails numerous problems, saying: Had we begun the negotiations with these issues first, we would still be in the Diaspora. But today we live on much of our land.

Al-Za'nun mentioned several issues to be discussed with the Israeli side that are indisputable and form part of the Arab demands, such as the need for Israel's pullout from the Golan, south Lebanon, and from the remaining parts of the West Bank and Jerusalem.

He said he will seize the opportunity of the Arab Parliamentary Union's current meeting in Damascus to

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dispel any misunderstanding about Palestinian stances that are rejected by the Syrian side, especially the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 accords.

Asked about the presence of Palestinian opposition factions in Damascus, he said he met former PNC Speaker Khalid al-Fahum and held contacts with many Palestinian leaders to brief them on developments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He added that he hopes these leaders will join the PNC, especially since their seats are still available.

Al-Za'nun asserted: We refused to convene the PNC if Israel denied entry to the self-rule territories to even one PNC member abroad. He noted that Israel allowed entry for [Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine leader] Nayif Hawatimah even though he has Jordanian nationality and that Abu-'Abbas entered despite an uproar. He added that permission was given for the entry of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] leader George Habash. For reasons of his own he did not go. Al-Za'nun emphasized that Habash can enter [the territories] anytime but PFLP Political Bureau members, such as Taysir Qub'ah, 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, Layla Khalid, and others, entered on Habash's behalf.

Commenting on Israel's siege of the Palestinians, al-Za'nun said Israel gives priority to its security even if this is at the expense of starving the Palestinian people and dismembering cities. Therefore, he added, Israel insists on maintaining the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and separating Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian cities until the elections are held. He noted that these measures cause daily losses amounting to approximately $3 million and torment the Palestinian people in their travels between the West Bank and Gaza and even in their travel to Jordan. He said: We cannot do anything except wait for the elections. We hope the advocates of the peace process will win these elections.

Regarding Hebron, he said that for electoral reasons Israel postponed its agreed-upon withdrawal from Hebron. He added: We have promises that after the elections Israel will implement any measures it previously delayed.

**Palestinian Affairs: PA Claims Hamas Military Wing 'Almost Totally Eliminated'**

*TA1505191496 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] [Anchorman Hayim Yavin] 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the military wing of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], has been almost totally eliminated. This transpires from reports sent by senior Palestinian Authority [PA] officials to political sources in Jerusalem. Muhammad Dayf and four other Hamas members remain on the run.

According to documents found in the offices of Hamas in Gaza, a new military wing had been operating in Gaza after members of 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam refused to kill 'Arafat and other PA officials. These details have been learned by our correspondent Shlomi Eldar, and here is his report:

[Begin recording] [Eldar] The PA uncovered the new military wing in the wake of information obtained from confiscated Hamas archives. Some of the information was stored on computer discs, while some material was gathered from written notes and documents seized in the Islamic University and in mosques.

Hamas leaders in Jordan demanded that 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam launch an armed struggle against the PA and 'Arafat's men and even ordered its members to plant a car bomb near Gaza prison where Hamas leaders were being held in custody, but they refused to act against 'Arafat.

[Rashid Abu-Shibak, deputy head of Palestinian Security Service, in Arabic] They believed that the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades would not serve their future plans of action, so they began to set up a secret apparatus, an underground [last word in Hebrew], so that it would be a substitute for the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. They received clear orders from abroad that any member of this apparatus who is pursued in the future by the PA should not join the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades but should form a new apparatus in parallel to 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam.

[Eldar] Seventy Hamas members from Saudi Arabia arrived in Jordan and from there proceeded to Gaza to entrench the new wing's infrastructure. The man seen on the screen is Ibrahim al-Muqaddamah, the group's No. 1 man, who spent eight years in an Israeli jail and was entrusted with the job of organizing the network. Al-Muqaddamah is now being held in Gaza prison. According to confiscated correspondence, the group managed to kill two Palestinian policemen and an officer who refused to collaborate with them. Additional information suggests that they were responsible for the slaying of Kamal Kahil, the man who headed the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Brigades who was killed in a house explosion in Gaza's al-Shaykh Radwan neighborhood, and Israel was accused of having assassinated him. [end recording]

[Yavin] The PLO claims to have exterminated 90 percent of Hamas. Can it be trusted?

[Eldar] Information to this effect, based on correspondence seized from Hamas archives, was received in Jerusalem. According to it, there was an entire network whose members were captured one by one. Jerusalem

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was asked whether it could keep the report on a low profile since the PA does not feel comfortable saying it has eliminated 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, to avoid causing ferment in Gaza by Hamas supporters, and so as not to give cause to the leadership in Jordan to prove that they are still alive and kicking.

[Yavin] So, you are saying that we may believe them and that the report is credible.

[Eldar] At least that is how this information was received by Israel. As it transpires from this discovery, Hamas' current structure actually includes a new wing. The head — the political leadership, which issues the orders to the political wing and spiritual leaders — is in Jordan; that is the first wing. Then there is 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the other wing we know all too well, and now we have been introduced to a new wing, the underground wing of Hamas. Incidentally, according to the report, the entire 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam network — we know some of its members by name — as well as the underground Hamas wing, is currently in jail in Gaza.

[Yavin] So, is this an underground that does not recognize Hamas and is in conflict with it?

[Eldar] No, this is an underground set up by Hamas to replace 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam seeing that the latter categorically refused to kill 'Arafat or to plant a car bomb.

[Yavin] Their strength has been sapped, but this is no guarantee that other small groups will not spring up.

[Eldar] That is exactly what Palestinian Security Service officials say. They say that although they have eliminated 90 percent of the infrastructure, this does not mean that at this very moment a substitute group is not getting organized in the field seeing that Hamas has as many tentacles as an octopus.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Adviser Comments on Bet El Investigation**

*TA1505174896 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 May 96*

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on reports by some news media to the effect that the Palestinian police detained a number of suspects in the aftermath of the shooting near Bet El in the Ramallah Governorate, 'Arafat adviser Nabil Abu-Rudaynah told our correspondent Kayid Zahir that the Palestinian Authority [PA] is continuing its investigation of the case and that it has adopted and is adopting measures to prevent the repetition of such acts in the future.

[Begin recording] [Abu-Rudaynah] As you know, the investigation is still going on and there are still major questions about the nature of what happened.

[Zahir] Has the PA detained anyone?

[Abu-Rudaynah] Palestinian measures continue to be adopted on the ground. Scant information is available about this matter, but as I told you there are major questions about what occurred in Bet El.

[Zahir] Has the PA adopted or will it adopt any measures in the wake of this incident?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As you are aware, the PA adopts its routine security measures and carries out the necessary investigations. [end recording]

**Palestinian Affairs: Norwegian Foreign Minister on Observers' Mission**

*JN1405115996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0900 GMT 14 May 96*

[Report by Salim Abu-Salih in Hebron on 14 May]

[FBIS Translated Text] A news conference by Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjoern Godal ended a short while ago. The Norwegian minister, along with 32 Norwegian observers, arrived in the city this morning. The observers will deploy in the city this evening in compliance with the Taba accord signed by the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

At his news conference, the foreign minister asserted that the international observers will not play the role of military personnel or policemen. They will not intervene to resolve disputes or end clashes. They are civilians whose job will remain confined to monitoring the situation and submitting reports on the two sides' compliance with the signed agreements.

Godal asserted that patrols will be deployed throughout the city. Nonetheless, he added that the places where the international observers will be deployed on the perimeters of settlements have not been determined yet. He noted that talks are under way with the Israelis to reach an agreement on this.

The Norwegian minister noted his meeting with Shim'on Peres and Israeli Foreign Minister Baraq who pledged to extend their cooperation to render the observers' mission a success.

For his part, Hebron Mayor Engineer Mustafa 'Abd-al-Nabi al-Natshah hoped that the temporary international presence in Hebron will help create a climate of tranquility and quiet and a sense of security for the Palestinians. He pointed out that the Norwegian unit is the vanguard of a new international force in the

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city. Other observers from Canada, Australia, Denmark, Italy, and Turkey will arrive in the city later. He did not specify their overall number, which is still being negotiated between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

International observers will wear brown uniforms and blue jackets and carry an insignia with the acronym TIPH [Temporary International Presence in Hebron]; that is, international observers.

**Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Condemns Israeli 'Obstacles' to Meeting**

*JN1405152896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat is expected to arrive in the city of Bethlehem this evening to participate in the meetings of the Legislative Council and to present the Council of Ministers' program for discussion and endorsement.

In other news, Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray' condemned Israel's efforts to hamper the arrival of Legislative Council members in the city of Bethlehem for council meetings, scheduled for 15 and 16 May.

In a statement to the Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic, Quray' described the Israeli obstacles as a serious attempt to kill Palestinian democracy and pointed out that most of the council committees have been unable to carry out their duties over the past two days. This, he said, may prevent the council from being convened tomorrow.

The council will discuss committee reports, draft laws on the Palestinian Monetary Authority, and proposals and observations from a number of citizens.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Receives Fatah Leaders in Bethlehem**

*JN1405193196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 May 96*

[Report by Sa'id 'Ayyad in Bethlehem]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received a number of Fatah leaders in the West Bank, members of Fatah in the Legislative Council, and ministers at his residence in Bethlehem this evening to discuss political developments.

In statements to Voice of Palestine, Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray', also known as Abu-'Ala', said that the council will not discuss the policy statement during its two sessions in Bethlehem on 15 and 16 May. He said that the ministerial statement should be discussed during the next cabinet session, after which it will be referred to the Legislative Council.

The president also met with several popular and official delegations in Bethlehem Governorate. The president will continue these meetings tonight and tomorrow morning.

**Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council's Session Postponed Unitl 16 May**

*JN1505150396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat left for Nabulus after participating in the meetings of the first Legislative Council session in Bethlehem today. In Nabulus, 'Arafat will receive a number of foreign states' consuls.

The Legislative Council session, which was scheduled to be resume this afternoon, was postponed until 1000 [0700 GMT] on 16 May.

The Legislative Council's Legal Committee resumed its closed session to discuss the mechanism of the subcommittees' work.

**Palestinian Affairs: Clinton Said Responsible for Deterioration in Mideast**

*MM1505150596 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 14 May 96 p 15*

[Editorial: "Violence Erupts in Occupied Jerusalem"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem has witnessed a new fedayeen operation which was carried out by young Arab men and resulted in an Israeli being killed and three others wounded. It coincided with a successful attack launched by mujahidin belonging to Lebanese Hizballah on an Israeli patrol in the security belt area, which led to five soldiers being wounded.

This escalation in violence is in retaliation for the Qana massacre committed by Israeli aircraft in southern Lebanon three weeks ago. Islamic movements inside and outside the occupied territories threatened then to avenge the killing of the hundred martyrs in the massacre. And experience has always shown that when these movements say they are going to do something they do it.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the tripartite summit held in Cairo by King Husayn of Jordan, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat agreed to coordinate efforts to confront Hamas and the Islamic Jihad and prevent them from carrying out any operations against Israeli targets. So did the two movements' supporters want to torpedo this coordination or expose its failure before it began?! The Islamists who openly opposed the peace process and

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declared their intention to work to destroy it are well aware that any fedayeen operation or operations before the Israeli parliamentary elections, scheduled to be held before the end of the month, will hit Labor Party leader Shim'on Peres — the main horse on which everyone is betting — at his most vulnerable spot and could lead to his and his party's collapse and consequently that of the peace process.

We disagree with this interpretation, namely that the aim is to torpedo the peace process, because the outcome — in view of the lack of other options and the state of Arab disunion since the second Gulf war — would be detrimental to the region as a whole. However, we acknowledge that the settlement imposed by Israel and the United States on the Arabs, in particular the Palestinians, will not achieve for them the minimum of their legitimate rights.

Israel still has not withdrawn from the occupied Arab territories and it continues to encroach on the sanctity of the self-rule areas, arresting its opponents. And above all, the Palestinians' living conditions are now worse than they were before the Oslo agreements, because of the continued closure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the huge deficit in the Palestinian National Authority's budget.

Regrettably, the U.S. Administration, the sponsor of the peace process, lost all its qualifications as a neutral broker when it sided completely with the Israeli side, and it violated all moral and political conventions when it supported the Qana massacre and refused to condemn the Hebrew state. In fact it insisted on not discussing the UN report on it in the UN Security Council.

The continued U.S.-Israeli insults to the Arabs have created a state of extreme anger which could explode into an unprecedented cycle of violence. The recent fedayeen operation in Jerusalem is probably the beginning of it. Peres, who committed the Qana massacre, is not much different from his rival, Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu. In fact he has outdone Ariel Sharon, hero of the Sabra and Shatila massacre. And he is now seen by most Arabs as a terrorist who cannot be trusted and should not be helped to win the upcoming elections.

The only party which should be held responsible for this deterioration in the region is the United States and its leader, President Bill Clinton, whose administration is specialized in imposing new blockades and toughening old ones on the Arabs. As long as he is in charge of this administration, the most biased toward the Hebrew state, his country's interests, not just the peace process sponsored by it, will continue to be harmed.

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## Algeria

### Algeria: FIS Spokesman Discusses Organization's Strategy

*AU1505144996 Berlin DIE TAGESZEITUNG in German 13 May 96 p 10*

[Interview with FIS spokesman Abu Ussama by Thomas Dreger; place and date not given: "We Do Not Want a Theocracy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Dreger] Following his victory in the presidential elections, Liamine Zeroual wants to let the Algerians elect a new parliament next year, at the latest. The FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] will probably remain banned, which means that it will not be allowed to take part. Has the FIS lost the struggle for power?

[Ussama] Although the FIS was excluded from the presidential elections, the party wrote a letter to Zeroual afterwards. It was an invitation to have talks with the entire opposition, including the FIS. The aim was to hold free elections. We thought that General Zeroual would be in a position to stand his ground against the other generals — those generals who annulled the 1991 parliamentary elections and brought chaos to the country. But nothing changed after the presidential elections. Now the dialogue is only held with a few selected people. Those in power continue to count on violence.

[Dreger] Yet other members of the opposition who used to be allies of the FIS are now talking to Zeroual, including the "Front of Socialist Forces" (FFS). Has the opposition front collapsed?

[Ussama] The secretary general of the FFS, Hocine Ait Ahmad, says: The drama can only end if the FIS participates. That is the message that he conveyed to Zeroual. The regime can try to hold parliamentary elections, but this will not end the drama. Violence and terror will continue. Not letting the FIS participate in the elections will make the situation even more difficult. And those who take part in the elections, will not win.

[Dreger] What is the strategy of the FIS?

[Ussama] The FIS will cooperate with the other opposition parties and the population. We will continue to fight for peace and democracy.

[Dreger] The FIS has an armed branch: the "Armed Salvation Army" (AIS). Just recently, the German federal prosecutor charged two sons of FIS Chief Abbasa Madani with taking arms to Algeria. Are these "political means?"

[Ussama] The FIS is a political party that uses exclusively political means. The AIS is an armed movement, which follows the political program of FIS. But it has an independent leadership and defines its own strategy. The FIS has always demanded that the doors for political work be opened to all Algerians so that people are not forced to use military means.

[Dreger] But there are people who are active both for the FIS and AIS.

[Ussama] People who are politically active are only active in the political field.

[Dreger] Is procuring arms part of political activities?

[Ussama] No, that is military activity. The political activity of the FIS has included, for instance, organizing the Rome meeting. Parties with entirely different programs held talks there. The meeting was opposed by the regime. That means that the regime does not want peaceful solutions. We won a majority in two elections in the recent past. That shows that the people have confidence in our party. Our party was banned without giving any reason. The only explanation is that we won the parliamentary elections.

[Dreger] But there is terrorism on both sides. Imprisoned FIS representative Ali Belhadj himself has called for it.

[Ussama] The cycle of terrorism was opened by the regime. It broke off the elections. Then it dragged tens of thousands of FIS supporters to concentration camps in the desert and started to kill them. This caused a counter-repression. The situation benefited everyone who thought that problems can be solved by force. The ill-famed "Armed Islamic Groups" (GIA) were infiltrated by the Algerian secret service from the beginning. Many acts of violence were carried out by the intelligence service. The AIS, on the other hand, has never used violence against the population, nor has it carried out any acts of sabotage on Algerian industry.

[Dreger] What means does the AIS consider legitimate if Zeroual stays in power?

[Ussama] You have to ask the AIS leaders. As FIS representative, I say: We cannot accept that the majority of the population should be ignored, that the biggest party in Algeria should be forced into illegality.

[Dreger] Are there any contacts between the FIS and the GIA? Does the FIS have any influence on GIA supporters?

[Ussama] In terms of organizational structures, there are no links at all. But I can assure you: If a peaceful solution comes about in Algeria, the majority of GIA supporters will follow the FIS.

[Dreger] Why do imprisoned FIS leaders Abbasi Madani and Ali Belhadj not appeal to their supporters to end terrorism, as the regime demands?

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[Ussama] They are both in prison. Prisoners cannot issue appeals — neither for nor against war.

[Dreger] A worldwide Islamic network is frequently mentioned. What contacts do you have with other Islamist organizations?

[Ussama] The FIS is primarily an Algerian party. It maintains relations with other Islamic parties, just as Muslims maintain contacts with other Muslims. The so-called Islamic network is a fabrication by the dictators in Arab countries. It is meant to instill fear in the West, so that it continues to support the dictators.

[Dreger] What would a state governed by the FIS look like?

[Ussama] The FIS wants to establish a state that is based on Islamic principles, with a multiparty system, free elections, and guaranteed human rights.

[Dreger] Based on the international Human Rights Convention or human rights as defined by Islam?

[Ussama] There is hardly any difference.

[Dreger] "Hardly" means that there is some difference.

[Ussama] The main points are the same: freedom of the press, freedom of religion, prohibition of torture.

[Dreger] What about the dress code? Would women in a state ruled by the FIS have to wear a veil?

[Ussama] No. According to Islam, everyone can wear what they like. The government must not issue any rules on that.

[Dreger] Would the shari'ah be the legal basis?

[Ussama] Islamic law knows the principle of Idjtihad, which means developing modes of behavior for new situations from old sources. That function is to be assumed by the parliament. God left most of the problems for us to solve ourselves. The Koran says: When a new situation arises, the Muslims should meet and discuss it. Our Islamic state shall not be a religious, but a civilian state. We do not want a theocracy. In a theocracy, the ruler does in the name of God what he himself wants. In a civilian Islamic state, the ruler governs because he has been elected by the people.

**Algeria: FIS Founding Member on Current Situation**

*MM1405154896 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 May 96 p 6*

[Interview with FIS founding member Kamreddine Kharbane by Kamil al-Tawil in London; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Tawil] What is your assessment of the current situation in Algeria? Do you believe that a peaceful solution to the crisis is still possible, and on what conditions?

[Kharbane] The military regime in Algeria has lost its raison d'etre. It has been defeated militarily, economically, and socially. In addition, there are scandals of embezzlement and illegal transfers of funds abroad. The more loans there are, the more illegal transfers. The Algerian people's wealth is being plundered fearlessly and shamelessly. That is why this homeland's faithful sons must stop the hemorrhage of oil and gas because half of their revenues go to the army to kill and displace people, and the other half go to private accounts abroad. We must not allow the generations' future to remain in the hands of a gang.... The military authorities have known for a long while that they are finished. A peaceful solution in Algeria is totally out of the question under these circumstances. The military have adopted the policy of excluding the [Islamic Salvation] Front [FIS] from any solution, preferring instead to remain in the dark tunnel which they dug with their own hands. This was expected of them.

[Al-Tawil] What do you think of the view that the FIS is no longer a united front speaking with one voice, with which it would have been possible to negotiate a solution to the crisis?

[Kharbane] Everyone knows that both Shaykh Abassi Madani and Shaykh Ali Belhadj are the FIS' legitimate and historic leaders, and that their positions are binding as far as all the FIS' political and military structures in Algeria and abroad are concerned. If the military clique was serious about dialogue and negotiations, it would not have hesitated to release the shaykhs and the political prisoners, and then start the negotiations with them instead of holding useless meetings. Some of the brothers' remarks that the FIS has two poles, one desperate and the other genuine, are only empty and baseless talk which serve the interests of neither the FIS nor the mujahidin. The recognized FIS leadership consists of four elements: The two FIS shaykhs Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, may God deliver them, the Islamic Salvation Army [AIS], the shaykhs who have been released, and the committee abroad. It is possible that some brothers have different opinions and interpretations. Yes, this has been the case since the FIS' inception and we do not hide it because the FIS includes members of many trends. Among the principles according to which the FIS was founded is the principle of collective leadership, and, in it, consultation is mandatory. Had the FIS leadership been in one man's hands or followed one direction, it would have attended the "unity" meeting. Everybody remembers that some (FIS) elements joined the Armed [Islamic] Group [GIA], but also that the majority remained within the original FIS structure. Inci-

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dentally, the factions which left the GIA, in particular brothers Said Mekhloufi and Rabah Kattaf, should return and finish building the AIS in the center, especially in the difficult circumstances that the country is now experiencing. They must not forget that they were among the first to call for the formation of the AIS. It is a virtue to admit one's mistakes.

[Al-Tawil] President Zeroual is currently acting as though the FIS did not exist. Would you care to comment?

[Kharbane] President Zeroual pretends to ignore the FIS, but is certainly not acting as though it did not exist. Evidence of that lies in the fact that with everyone he meets within the so-called dialogue, the FIS is the main topic of conversation. The FIS is the Algerian people. Whoever wants to eliminate the FIS must first eliminate the people, and this is impossible. Hence, the FIS' demand, supported by the people, is to establish an Islamic state in the tradition of the Prophet and the orthodox caliphs, instead of a sovereign Algerian state based on the November principles. Like it or not, God willing, this will be achieved.

[Al-Tawil] Some of the FIS founders in Algeria have recently issued a statement calling for a peaceful solution to the crisis. According to the founding leaders in Algeria, it seems that the situation on the ground is not as some people abroad might imagine. Do you think that a move by these former officials could help resolve the crisis?

[Kharbane] We must distinguish between being affected by the situation in Algeria, and knowing the situation in Algeria. We know that our brothers in Algeria are more affected than we are by the situation there. However, because of the media blackout on the FIS in Algeria, we, who are abroad, have more information than they do, through newspapers, contacts, and visitors.

With regard to the question on whether this move could help resolve the crisis, I believe that it has now become clear that these attempts have failed after the ruling clique has chosen the security solution.

[Al-Tawil] It has been rumored that some of President Zeroual's recent popularity is due to the GIA's practices.

[Kharbane] If you want to assess Zeroual's popularity, go to the football stadiums, where you will hear the people's view. The stadiums have become the only free forums in Algeria: "The public cheers the mujahidin and insults the regime." The illegal GIA practices such as killing women and children and raping innocent Muslim girls could have distorted the jihad and turned the people against it. However, Almighty God has exposed and unmasked these criminals, particularly after the assassination of the esteemed brothers: brother Ezzedine Bia who was one of the first mujahidin with Shaykh Mustapha Bouili, and was an official at the FIS Blida office; brother Nasser Tetraoui, an agricultural engineer, who was an official in the FIS Ouargla office; Shaykh Mohamed Said, the famous preacher who was an official in the FIS provisional office and who joined the GIA with Abderrezak Redjam, a FIS founding member; brother Abdelhamid Bouchi, the famous preacher in the Kasbah district; and brother Nasreddine Tourkmane, head of the FIS office in Medea governorate. All these along with some preachers and FIS leaders were treacherously killed by these mercenaries. After that, the faithful jihad battalions, among them brother Said Mekhloufi and Rabah Kattaf, broke away and issued statements exposing the GIA's true face. It has now become quite clear to the Algerian people and to Muslims all over the world that the GIA takes its orders from the intelligence services and commits crimes in the name of Islam to sully the jihad's and mujahidin's name. These battalions led by brother Said Mekhloufi, which have distanced themselves from the GIA, must join hands with brothers Ben Aicha and Madani Mezrak to finish building the AIS.

[Al-Tawil] You have been absent for a while from overt action. What is the reason behind your public move now?

[Kharbane] Every time I have had the chance, I have not hesitated to explain and provide the necessary information. But, as you know, the regime in Algeria has opted for physical elimination of the FIS leaders abroad. The assassination of Shaykh Abdelbeki Sahraoui and his assistant Professor Omar (known as Noureddine) proves it. According to our information, there is not the slightest doubt that the assassination was carried out by Algerian intelligence personnel. It is possible also that France was involved (in the assassination). Shaykh Abdelbeki was subjected to round the clock surveillance. We do not know, however, whether France's involvement is to do with the security establishment or with individuals. That is why I was moving carefully. I have now chosen to seek asylum in Britain, because it is considered a safe country, and one with great freedom of expression.

[Al-Tawil] Would you care to comment on the kidnapping of the French monks?

[Kharbane] The Algerian intelligence organs should be asked about this operation. We believe that France should hold the Algerian authorities responsible for their safety.

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## Egypt

### Egypt: Chinese President Holds News Conference, Discusses Relations

*NC1505172596 Cairo MENA in Arabic*
*1645 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—Chinese President Jiang Zemin has declared that Egypt is the biggest Arab and African country and has a major influence and role in regional affairs. He said there is constant consultation on various issues between the two countries' leaders.

During a news conference with Egyptian and Chinese correspondents at al-Qubbah's Presidential Palace today, the Chinese president said he and President Husni Mubarak discussed several important issues. He noted that they exchanged views on current international conditions, the developing countries' role in preserving international peace, and ways to keep Africa free of nuclear weapons.

President Jiang added that he discussed with President Mubarak ways to strengthen Egyptian-Chinese political, economic, and cultural ties, declaring: As we approach the 21st century the two countries must strengthen their friendship and cooperation.

He emphasized that China constantly supports the Middle East peace process and the efforts to eliminate the difficulties preventing a comprehensive regional peace. He added that as a new multipolar world emerges, China is willing to make efforts and cooperate with all the developing countries and others to establish a new global economic system that is fair to everyone.

The Chinese president said his country's relations with the United States are in congruence with the two countries' major interests and serve world stability. He noted that these relations recently saw extensive development. He said these relations sometimes face difficulties and problems and undergo periodic vacillations. But he stressed that his country is willing to cooperate with the Americans to keep these relations sound.

Concerning relations with Russia and President Boris Yeltsin's recent visit to China, President Jiang said that China's relationship with Russia is based on mutual trust, equality, good neighborliness, cooperation, and mutual benefit and is not directed against any third country. He declared that such relationships are needed in the post-Cold War world.

At the beginning of his meeting with reporters President Jiang voiced appreciation for Egypt's independent and impartial policy that seeks to boost the Middle East peace process, strengthen Arab-African solidarity, and promote economic development in the Third World's developing nations.

He asserted that Egypt and China, as large countries, need to strengthen their friendship and cooperation, not only to serve the interests of the Egyptian and Chinese people, but to encourage cooperation between the countries of the North and the South and establish a fruitful and equal cooperation that will benefit progress.

The Chinese president said his country backs President Husni Mubarak's initiative to turn the Middle East into a region free of weapons of mass destruction. He said he supports all the countries that wish to establish nuclear-free regions and explained that to further this objective China, in Cairo, recently signed an agreement to keep Africa a region free of nuclear weapons.

Talking about setting up a free industrial zone, President Jiang Zemin pointed out that his country is particularly interested in this initiative, which followed President Mubarak's call during his visit to China in 1994 to establish a center to distribute Chinese products in the Egyptian free trade zones.

He explained that some projects have already been established in the Egyptian free zone and that there is a plan to set up a center to promote Chinese products in Alexandria, for which studies are under way. We seek to launch productive projects and expand the sources of commodities to increase the volume of Egyptian exports to China, he said, adding: We signed three agreements in that connection yesterday and I am sure bilateral cooperation will take on a new shape.

The Chinese president pointed out that the two countries set up joint ventures in the context of economic cooperation, including an agricultural machinery and engines factory. The scale of investment is still small and we are willing to cooperate with Egypt to enjoy further cooperation based on mutual benefit, he said.

Jiang Zemin added that the two sides discussed how to use the rest of the Chinese loan to Egypt—428 million yuans. The money could be used to set up new joint ventures.

Touching on China's role in support of the peace process, Jiang

Zemin said that as a permanent member of the UN Security Council China will urge the parties concerned to adopt flexible and practical stances to eliminate the obstacles hindering a just and comprehensive peace as soon as possible.

He said his country is prepared to make efforts in support of peace and stability as well as to help establish

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a new economic world order and protect the rights and interests of developing countries.

The Chinese president emphasized that the establishment of Chinese-Israeli relations in 1992 meant helping peace and stability in the region. He added that China is careful to establish good relations with the Middle East on the basis of cooperation for peace.

He said his country will continue to support the Palestinian people's fair struggle to restore their lawful rights and build an independent state. He said that China was among the first states to recognize the PLO and support the Palestinian self-rule agreement. He added that his country hopes the current Palestinian-Israeli negotiations will culminate in a fair solution of the Palestinian issue.

Jiang Zemin voiced support for efforts to achieve economic cooperation, noting that China will take part in the regional economic cooperation conference in Cairo in October. We are prepared to make positive efforts to develop bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region and Chinese businessmen are prepared to take part in reconstruction efforts in the region, he said, adding that there is broad scope for cooperation.

The Chinese president emphasized that all the members of the international community are equal and that each member is expected to play his role in his own region and beyond.

Touching on the U.S.-Japanese alliance, he pointed out that the treaty between the two countries was a bilateral arrangement that had its historic reasons. This arrangement should not go beyond the bilateral level, since this is bound to complicate things in the region, he said. He added that China focuses on the socialist modernization program, which needs long-term peace to achieve its desired goals and develop mutually beneficial cooperation with all the various countries, particularly the United States and Japan.

The news conference was attended by the Chinese foreign minister, Dr. Husayn Kamil Baha'-al-Din, minister of education and head of the honorary committee escorting the Chinese president, and the ambassadors of Egypt to China and China to Egypt.

**Egypt: Chinese President Leaves for Luxor After Talks With Mubarak**

*NC1605090096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0815 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and Chinese President Jiang Zemin held a final session of talks at the Presidential Office in Cairo today.

The two presidents reviewed all the topics discussed over the past two days. They dealt with ways to advance the Middle East peace process and current African, Asian, and other global issues, in addition to ways to promote bilateral ties in line with accords the two countries' delegations signed during the Chinese president's visit to Cairo.

After the talks President Mubarak bade farewell to the Chinese president at the Presidential Office. The visitor was also seen off by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

Education Minister Dr. Husayn Kamil Baha'-al-Din, head of the mission of honor for President Jiang Zemin, accompanied the president to Cairo Airport. The visitor left the airport for Luxor on a private visit to see archaeological and tourist sites in southern Egypt.

**Egypt: Japanese Official on Economic Aid to Egypt, Palestinians**

*NC1605100996 Cairo MENA in English 0859 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 16 May (MENA)—Japan attaches great importance to the pivotal role Egypt plays especially its constant efforts to push forward the peace process and maintain stability in the region, the director general of the Economic Cooperation Bureau at the Japanese Foreign Ministry said today.

The importance Japan attaches to Egypt comes within the context of the importance Japan attaches to the Middle East area, the Japanese official told AL-AKHBAR newspaper exclusively today.

The Egyptian economy is making sound progress and is heading towards the market economy, the Japanese official said, expressing his admiration over the steps taken and the Egyptian experience in reforming its economy.

Japan will continue to offer the grants being used in feeding economic cooperation projects and will grant Egypt loans needed immediately when the latter reaches an agreement with the International Monetary Fund to cancel its foreign debts, he said.

The Japanese official said Japan has furnished Egypt with 80 million dollars grants during the current year and has welcomed 3,000 Egyptian trainees in the fields of modern technology during the past two years and has sent 905 Japanese experts to Egypt at the same period of time.

The spokesman for the Japanese Foreign Ministry said Japan has provided 184 million dollars besides 200 million dollars to the Palestinian Authority.

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**Egypt: 'Abd-al-Rahman Followers Seized for Group Revival Attempt**

*NC1505171396 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 12 May 96 p 1*

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Security Intelligence Agency has foiled an attempt by followers of 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman to revive the Islamic Group's terrorist activities in al-Fayyum Governorate, carry out assassinations, and attack police patrols and commercial stores. The agency arrested 25 suspects, leaders and members of the organization that was to be revived. The weapons and ammunition they planned to use in their operations were seized.

The State Security Intelligence Agency monitored the recruitment of young men to serve in the Islamic Group's military wing run by six terrorists led by suspect Jabir 'Abd-al-Hamid Abu-Sharud. The terrorist leaders drew up training and indoctrination plans for the new members. The plans included meetings inside the mosques they controlled in al-Fayyum, the collection of funds to finance their clandestine operations and support detainees' families, and the supply of weapons, explosives, and ammunition.

All the members of the group were arrested before they could carry out their criminal attacks on innocent people and on security personnel in al-Fayyum and blow up vital installations.

The Higher State Security Prosecutor's Office has begun interrogating the suspects. Public Attorney Hisham Saraya ordered their remand for 15 days.

**Egypt: 3d Phase of Naval Exercise Begins; General Comments**

*NC1605101996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0845 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Alexandria, 16 May (MENA)—The third and final phase of the naval exercises Cleopatra 96 began this morning. Units from the Egyptian, French, and Italian naval forces are taking part in this one-day phase to analyze the maneuvers and the lessons learned from them.

Commanders of the participating units held an expanded meeting today to discuss the maneuvers carried out. Preliminary results indicate that the exercise has achieved its planned goals and that all sides benefited from the work carried out over the last five days.

The main phase of the naval exercise Cleopatra 96 ended yesterday evening, Wednesday [15 May], when all naval units returned to the port of Alexandria, after conducting their naval tasks deep in the sea for two full days. [passage omitted]

Brigadier General Hasan al-Harmil, commander of the Egyptian naval formation during the main phase, said the training has achieved its planned goals. He added that such joint exercises produce great benefits for all participant sides, in terms of exchanging combat expertise and learning about the most modern naval weaponry and technology and various plans to deal with varying and incidental naval situations and benefiting from them.

The first phase of the exercise began on Saturday and lasted for two days. It involved practical training at port covering rescue, fire, and communications by radio and flag.

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## Kuwait

### Kuwait: Oil Minister on U.S. Decision To Draw From Oil Reserves

*LD1505144896 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1045 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 15 May 1996 — Kuwaiti Oil Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Muhsin Mid'aj al-Mid'aj said here today that if the United States actually took the decision of drawing 12 million barrels from its strategic reserve, oil prices would undoubtedly be affected.

In an exclusive statement to the Kuwaiti news agency KUNA, Dr. al-Mid'aj pointed out that there were many things which could prompt change in the oil market, including this one. Recently U.S. President Bill Clinton announced that he was about to draw about 12 million barrels of oil from the U.S. strategic reserve to curb the recent rise in petrol prices in the U.S. market.

The Kuwaiti oil minister described the oil market as one of the most sensitive markets in the world that could be affected by the slightest events, news or rumors which spread whether they were true or false.

Regarding the call made by Venezuela, as one of the OPEC member-states, not to count the domestic oil consumption of OPEC member-states as part of the allocated quota, Dr. al-Mid'aj said: "Venezuela is an active OPEC member and its point of view should be respected but not necessarily agreed or disagreed with", pointing out: "Kuwait will give its opinion on this issue if it was discussed at the coming OPEC meeting in Vienna." He added: "Kuwait has not been officially contacted regarding this issue."

On the other hand, Dr al-Mid'aj expected oil prices to move during this summer in a limited way that would not draw attention if the situation remained the same regarding oil demand.

He said: "Price movements might go up or down during this period but it will not be by much." [passage omitted]

Furthermore, Dr al-Mid'aj said that the decrease in OPEC crude oil production, estimated at 35 thousand barrels last April, was very small and negligible compared with the excesses which have reached 1.006 million barrels per day.

He said that this decrease had no connection with Kuwait's and other OPEC member-states' demand to adhere to the allocated quotas. [passage omitted]

### Kuwait: Female Prisoner Returns From Iraq

*LD1505211396 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1635 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 15 May [KUNA] — This afternoon the state of Kuwait welcomed a Kuwaiti woman whose name was on the list of those who are either missing or prisoners in Iraq.

## Yemen

### Yemen: Vice President, Prime Minister Receive PRC Vice Premier

*JN1505195296 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President Major General 'Abd-Rabbuh Mansur Hadi today received the PRC delegation that is currently visiting our country. The delegation is led by Vice Premier Wu Bangguo. Talks dealt with the special relations between the two friendly countries and ways to promote them.

The vice president expressed his happiness over the relations, which benefit the two friendly peoples. He also expressed appreciation for PRC aid to Yemen and its support for Yemeni unity. He said he hopes that Yemeni-PRC relations continue to progress.

The PRC vice premier said the two countries' relations will grow in the near future. On behalf of his delegation, he thanked the Yemeni Government for its treatment of Chinese companies in Yemen and expressed China's readiness to participate in and contribute to investment and development in Yemen.

Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-'Attar, deputy prime minister and oil and mineral resources minister; 'Ali Hamid Sharaf, minister of construction, housing, and urban planning; Isma'il Luqman, head of the delegation escorts; and the PRC ambassador in Sanaa also attended the meeting.

Prime Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani also received PRC Vice Premier Wu Bangguo and his delegation today.

The two sides discussed ways to promote bilateral cooperation. The talks also dealt with cooperation on road and construction projects, and the prospects for PRC investment in the Aden free zone and in the oil industry.

The prime minister praised the historical relations and cooperation between Yemen and the PRC, stressing the importance of bolstering economic, trade, and investment cooperation. The two sides also reviewed a number of issues of joint interest.

Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-'Attar, deputy prime minister and oil and mineral resources minister, and the PRC ambassador in Sanza also attended the meeting.

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**Iraq: New Oil-for-Food Working Session To Convene 'Later Tonight'**

*JN1505181496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1710 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 15 May (INA)—The Iraqi and UN General Secretariat delegations agreed to hold a new working session to complete their discussions on the exchange of oil for food, medicine, and other basic necessities. The two delegations will hold this working session later tonight, Baghdad time. The two delegations held a working session to discuss the issue yesterday evening.

The INA correspondent in New York said that the Iraqi delegation, led by Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, will continue its meetings with the delegation from the UN General Secretariat, pending the return of UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali from his current visit to Moscow. Butrus-Ghali is scheduled to return to New York on 17 May.

**Iraq: UN, Iraqi Delegations To Brief Superiors on Talks**

*JN1605102696 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Nations, 16 May (INA)—The Iraqi and UN delegations agreed to brief their respective higher authorities on the results of their recent talks on the issue of oil in exchange for food, medicine, and other basic needs.

Hans Corell, head of the UN delegation and legal adviser to the UN secretary general, is expected to present these results to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali after his return from Moscow on Saturday [18 May].

Ahmad Fawzi, deputy spokesman of the UN General Secretariat, said that Hans Corell will brief the UN secretary general on the results achieved during the working sessions which the two delegations held recently.

Head of Iraqi Delegation Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari said he will brief his higher authorities in Baghdad on the outcome of the discussions with the UN General Secretariat.

Dr. al-Anbari added that the two sides agreed to wait for the UN secretary general's return. He noted that the UN General Secretariat is eager to arrive at a final solution to the subject.

The two sides arrived at this arrangement at the working session they held yesterday.

**Iraq: UNSC Urged To Question U.S. Statistics on Iraqi Needs**

*JN1505193096 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1820 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Nations, New York (INA)—Iraq urged UN Security Council [UNSC] members and the international community to be cautious about the false figures provided by the United States to promote its ulterior motives and bad faith, when it should be working to protect world peace and security.

In a press statement distributed here on 14 May, the Iraqi mission to the United Nations said that Madeleine Albright claimed during the UNSC consultations on 6 May that Iraq will obtain $2.7 billion to purchase food and medicine if it is allowed to sell oil for one year. She added that this amount exceeds Iraq's needs for an average year. She alleged that Iraq imported $1.3 billion worth of medicine and food in 1989.

The Iraqi mission refuted these allegations, saying that official figures indicate that Iraq imported $3.444 billion worth of food in 1989 alone, including $1.056 billion worth of food imports from the United States.

The Iraqi mission pointed out that $400 million of this amount was spent on medicine imports. Thus, Iraq spent $3.844 billion on medicine and food that year. [figures as received]

The Iraqi mission added that the population of Iraq was 17.400 million in 1989, but it is now 21.1 million. If we suppose that the price of food and medicine in 1989 remained unchanged in 1996, then the needs of the Iraqi people will total approximately $4.6 billion in 1996.

**Iraq: Opposition Demands End of Sanctions, Seeks UN Supervision**

*NC1505155196 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] An Iraqi opposition source has stated that all opposition factions at home and abroad are demanding that the sanctions against Iraq be lifted because they harm only the Iraqi people. The source said the opposition sets a single condition for this: The United Nations must supervise all sales of oil and deposit the oil revenues in accounts under its own supervision. There should be no spending without the approval of an official appointed by the international organization to oversee these funds.

The source stressed the importance of UN supervision of the distribution of food and medicine so that the supplies can reach the people who need them. The source recalled that the Iraqi regime is squandering the

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money of our people to build palaces for tyrant Saddam and meet his personal whims without caring about the tragedy our people have been experiencing for long years.

**Iraq: Sources See 'No Sign' of U.S. Concessions on Oil-for-Food Talks**

*MM1605104296 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 May 96 pp 1,6*

[Report by Raghidah Dirgham in New York and AL-HAYAH in Moscow: "U.S. Readiness To Accept Iraqi Formula for 'Oil-for-Food'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali held talks in Moscow yesterday with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov. AL-HAYAH has learned that the two sides discussed the progress of the "oil-for-food" talks between the international organization and Iraq, in addition to some regional issues as well as relations between Russia and the United Nations.

Meanwhile, in New York, circles familiar with the "oil-for-food" talks as defined by Resolution 986 rule out any significant progress in the talks before Butrus-Ghali's return Saturday [18 May]. Iraqi sources have said that the secretary general's "intensified efforts," prior to his departure from New York, to reconcile the Iraqi and U.S. positions with regard to supervision of the distribution of oil revenues, food, and medicines in all parts of Iraq had "failed" due to the U.S. side's rejection of "six formulas that we proposed" to the General Secretariat. Other sources, however, hinted that there is U.S.-British readiness to agree on one of these formulas.

Despite additional public statements by the U.S. Administration and the British ambassador to the United Nations, predicting that an agreement will be reached on the memorandum of understanding on the implementation of resolution 986, the Iraqi sources said "there is no sign that they (the Americans) are ready to make concessions on any of their proposals."

The United States and Britain had proposed amendments to the draft memorandum concerning oil sales by Iraq — amounting to $1 billion each 90 days for six months — to satisfy urgent humanitarian needs in Iraq, which states the conditions for selling oil and distributing food and medicine in all parts of the country.

The General Secretariat's delegation and Iraq have reached formulas which seem acceptable to both the U.S. and British sides, and which address most of the 22 U.S.-British amendments. Some major issues, however, are still pending, in particular the United Nations' powers with regard to supervising the distribution, not only in northern Iraq, but also everywhere else in the country. Leon Panetta, a senior White House official, said Tuesday night that President Bill Clinton's administration is closely monitoring the negotiations and that "all eyes are on the negotiations with Iraq." He said that an agreement on selling Iraqi oil in accordance with Resolution 986 "will solve many problems for them and for us." In statements to a limited group of journalists, he added that the negotiations "are on the right track" and that "all the signs are that the Iraqis are going through a difficult period and are experiencing economic and social difficulties, and this affects the negotiations' progress."

Panetta's remarks assume special importance given that the rise in oil prices has become a political issue in the competition between the Democrats and Republicans in a U.S. election year.

Sources monitoring the negotiations believe Panetta's remarks indicate that the U.S. Administration is serious in its attempt to reach agreement on the memorandum of understanding for implementing Resolution 986, but fear that "the optimistic statements are part of a public relations strategy aimed at emphasizing optimism, in anticipation of failure." U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright and Robert Pelletreau, assistant secretary of state for Middle East affairs, stated that they expect an agreement to be reached. Sir John Weston, the British ambassador to the United Nations, made similar statements during the past two days and added: "My feeling is that the negotiations have achieved a satisfactory result, and that they [the Iraqis] are awaiting Baghdad's response."

However, 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation at the talks, said that all the sides involved in the talks are awaiting a response. He added that only political decisions still stand in the way of an agreement.

Al-Anbari did not expect any new developments before Butrus-Ghali's return from Moscow, especially since political decisions require an intervention at that level.

Meanwhile, in Moscow, an official at the UN information center refused to give details on the Butrus-Ghali-Primakov meeting, saying that it was "a business lunch."

A source close to the Russian Foreign Ministry told AL-HAYAH that Moscow wanted to ask the secretary general "many questions," including on the "double standards" used in dealing with states. He explained that a storm breaks out whenever reports of Russian equipment exports to Iraq are leaked, yet the United Nations does not investigate reports of Western companies exporting dual-purpose equipment to Iraq. Russia

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is seeking clarifications on the so-called "leaked information" on the negotiations between the United Nations and Iraq concerning the implementation of Resolution 986, which includes "oil for food."

The talks are expected to resume when Butrus-Ghali meets with Russian President Boris Yeltsin today.

The secretary general yesterday delivered a speech in the Russian parliament in which he praised Moscow's role in the international community and said that Russia is a "key member" of the United Nations and has discharged all its financial obligations toward the international committee.

**Iraq: Government, U.S. Blamed for Failure of Oil-for-Food Talks**

*NC1505172596 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 15 May 96*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] When the fourth round of [oil-for-food] negotiations between the Saddamite regime and the UN Security Council started the talks hogged the limelight and the regime began to give out signs of optimism. But when the negotiations reached a deadlock and it became clear that no tangible results had been achieved, the regime closed the door on the talks and never discussed them again.

Instead of diagnosing the reasons for the failure and pinpointing the side responsible, the regime started to level accusations and [word indistinct] against this country or that. The regime was desperately trying to restore credibility and maintain the air of optimism it creates on such occasions. We do not want to go into the details of the regime's status in these negotiations but we would like to pause at the regime's engagement in this tug of war, which has yielded no specific results.

Although the negotiations have long dragged on and the regime is attaching much importance to them, claiming that it complied with all the clauses of Security Council Resolution 986 on the exchange of oil for food and medicine, the negotiations have achieved no practical results. They have moved in a vicious circle since their launch. Who is to blame? Is it the Saddamite regime? Is it the United States, as the regime is trying to say? Or is it both sides?

Undoubtedly, the two sides are responsible. But the Saddamite regime takes most of the blame because it is primarily responsible for the tragedy the Iraqi people have been experiencing. As they say, the one who starts the trouble is the one to blame; the Saddamite regime is the side that started these developments. The regime is directly responsible for these obstacles and this procrastination. There is a need, therefore, to remove this regime so that the unjust international resolutions (?against the Iraqi people) can be revoked.

**Iraq: Plot To Kill Iranian Opposition Figure Said Foiled**

*NC1505141996 Paris AFP in English 1327 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, May 15 (AFP)—Iraqi authorities foiled a plot to kill Iranian opposition leader Mas'ud Rajavi at his headquarters here when they made several arrests, seized a cannon and defused a car bomb, a spokesman said Wednesday [15 May].

"Iraqi security services arrested the terrorists sent by Iran while they were preparing to carry out their plans to assassinate" Rajavi, head of the People's Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, MKO, movement spokesman Hasan Nezam al-Molki said.

Al-Molki showed journalists a 320-millimeter cannon, which he said "can fire a shell packed with 25 kilograms (more than 50 pounds) of high explosives and was to have been used by the terrorists to kill Rajavi."

He added the authorities also defused a car bomb which was to have been used to block rescue work at the Mojahedin headquarters following the attack on Rajavi.

"One of the terrorists" was killed during his arrest, he said, without specifying when the incidents took place and how many people were involved.

"The cannon was made in Iranian military plants before it was taken apart to make it easier to smuggle into Iraq," he said.

Al-Molki accused the second secretary of the Iranian embassy in Baghdad, Nader Yar-Ahmadi, of having "supervised the preparation of these (foiled) attacks."

"The terrorist diplomats at the embassy in Baghdad of the mullahs' regime gave the terrorist group the information and money needed for their mission," he charged.

Al-Molki called on Iraqi authorities to "close the nest of espionage and terrorism in Baghdad and arrest the Iranian diplomats."

A People's Mojahedin member was killed here in March, bringing to six the number of opposition figures killed in Baghdad by alleged Iranian agents since May 1995, the organization said.

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**Iraq: Red Cross Aids in Repatriation of Female Kuwaiti 'Citizen'**

*JN1505163596 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1520 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 15 May (INA)—The competent Iraqi authorities today facilitated the repatriation of Nadya Muhammad Shatit al-'Anzi, a resident of Iraq for more than five years.

A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry said that the repatriation of the Kuwaiti citizen was conducted in coordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC].

The spokesman added that the Kuwaiti citizen had previously reported to the ICRC mission in Baghdad and said that she was about to determine whether she wanted to return to her family in Kuwait or settle in Iraq. The wishes of the Kuwaiti citizen were later relayed to the competent Iraqi authorities, who informed the ICRC that Nadya al-'Anzi had the full right to live in Iraq or return to Kuwait. On this basis, the Kuwaiti citizen's family reunion was completed.

**Iraq: Opposition Reports Explosion at Intelligence Building**

*JN1505140196 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A time bomb was detonated inside a building belonging to the tyrant's intelligence service in the al-Karradah area in Baghdad.

The newspaper KURDISTAN NWAY's 7 May issue reported that the bomb was detonated on 4 May. The magnitude of human and material losses caused by the explosion are not known. The paper indicated that security troops and intelligence men surrounded the building and prevented citizens from walking on the streets adjacent to the site of the explosion.

In a separate development, the paper said military institutions and security and party offices in the city of Karkuk were placed on high alert in anticipation of a flare-up of disturbances in the city in the wake of increased military operations against the regime. The residents of the city declared their opposition to the regime in the aftermath of the racial displacement campaigns that affected hundreds of Kurdish and Turkoman families in the governorate.

**Iraq: Car Bomb Explodes in Baghdad 11 May**

*NC1505180496 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A reliable source in Baghdad informed today's KURDISTAN NWAY that a booby-trapped Toyota Corolla exploded near an apartment block on Haifa Street in Baghdad on 11 May. The source added that the car belonged to the repressive intelligence apparatus of the 'Aflaqite authority. The source noted that car theft is widespread in Baghdad, where such incidents occur daily.

**Iraq: Opposition Claims Attack on Regime Position 5 May**

*JN1505132996 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] In continuation of the jihad operations aimed at making troops leave civilian areas and return to their barracks and camps, a group of heroic mujahidin attacked a regime position in the al-Shirsh area, north of the al-Qurnah District in the al-Basrah Governorate.

Our sources said that the attack, which was carried out on 5 May, destroyed two vehicles and set several stockpiles of weapons on fire. A second lieutenant and four soldiers were killed, and others were wounded in the attack.

The sources affirmed that the military position had been attacked by the mujahidin before. Grave losses in terms of human lives and equipment were inflicted in the earlier attack.

**Iraq: Regime Forces Said To Surround Khanaqin, Execute 1**

*NC1505180196 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Citing an informed source, KURDISTAN NWAY says today that the Iraqi regime's forces besieged Khanaqin on 9 May, arresting several citizens including Kumayt Nuri Najm. Najm was later executed by the regime's executioners' firing squad.

Elsewhere, KURDISTAN NWAY says the 'Aflaqite regime's executioners arrested several Kurdish citizens in Karkuk on 13 May on the grounds that they [word indistinct] to settle in the town.

**Iraq: Saddam's 'New Deal' To Revive Tribal System**

*MM1505134596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 May 96 p 2*

[Article by Amir Taheri in London: "Saddam Husayn Tries To Revive the Tribal System Following the Collapse of the Party Control System"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi President Saddam Husayn is trying hard to revive the system of tribal control

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established by the British in Iraq during the twenties. Specialists are saying that the restoration of the tribal system in Iraq could split the country into scores of small shaykhdoms, linked to President Saddam Husayn by vague personal allegiance ties.

Over the past few months the Iraqi president has undertaken several steps to revive the tribal structure, including:

1. Effectively reviving the tribal law dating back to the time of the British mandate, which was always the target of attacks by nationalists and patriots striving for modernization, who viewed it as a leftover of the feudal era. The existence of the law effectively meant the existence of two judicial and legislative systems in Iraq: one for city dwellers, and another for the country people and tribes. The same crime could have two different sentences depending on where it was committed. General 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim repealed the tribal law in 1958.

2. President Saddam Husayn "apologized profusely" for what he described as the successive Baghdad governments' "injustice" toward the tribal chiefs since the republic was established in July 1958. This apology opens the door to payment of compensation by the Iraqi Government to the tribal chiefs "wronged" by the Baghdad central authorities over the past 38 years.

3. A review of the 1959, 1969, 1970, 1971, and 1974 agrarian reform laws is required in order to return the land confiscated from the tribal chiefs. In cases where the return of the land is not possible for some reason, a suitable alternative will be offered. If this is not acceptable either, the chief concerned can claim financial compensation.

4. All the tribal chiefs' and supreme chiefs' titles which were canceled by the government will be restored with all appropriate honors and privileges.

5. Direct links between members of the tribes, as Iraqi citizens, and the Iraqi authorities will effectively cease. Instead, their links to the state will be through tribe members appointed by the chiefs and acting as intermediaries. If this is implemented in full, the tribe members will be exempt from paying direct taxes to the government. Instead, the chiefs will collect taxes and determine the government's share according to the old "tribute" system.

6. It is intended to establish a council of chiefs alongside the national assembly (parliament), to coordinate at the highest levels and through the institutions with the presidency and the other state organs. This will effectively diminish the powers of the National Council, elected last March.

7. Debts owed by tribe members to the various state-owned banks will be canceled. Although it is difficult to obtain any estimates in this context, specialists believe that huge amounts are involved.

The loans were granted mostly to improve farms and develop animal husbandry projects, and over the past years, to establish handicraft centers in some tribal areas.

8. Young tribe members will no longer be automatically expected to do compulsory military service. Instead, each tribe will be given a compulsory draft quota that it must achieve. This will enable the tribal chiefs to exempt anyone they wish to exempt. Also, the total number of compulsory conscripts will decrease by some 60 percent, if Baghdad continues to aim for specialization in its armed forces, focused around the Republican Guard corps.

9. Each tribal area will be allocated a special quota in the development budgets. The central government will continue to exercise control over projects related to the national interest, while local development projects will be initiated and implemented in close cooperation with the chiefs. Each chief will also be given certain quotas to be spent on projects which he deems necessary for his tribe.

10. The central government's commitment guaranteeing comprehensive education up to secondary level will continue. The chiefs will nonetheless have the final say, since they will be able, for example, to close some girls' schools after the age of 12.

President Saddam Husayn has been promoting his new deal with the tribal chiefs in a series of visits he recently undertook to Tikrit, Mosul, and al-Ramadi.

He presented the new deal as a step toward "decentralization" and part of the "democratic" process which he had promised. He is also trying to gain the tribal chiefs' personal "allegiance," often describing himself as an honorary member of this or that tribe.

In one of his speeches in al-Ramadi, he said that successive Iraqi regimes have weakened the country by ignoring the tribal structure. He also claimed that "plans" by Iraq's enemies were behind this.

President Husayn's policy of reviving the tribal system is governed by security considerations. It is no secret that he has increasing doubts about the army and the security organs, and even the Ba'th Party's organizations.

Many factors have contributed to these doubts. Former Chief of Staff General Nizar al-Khazraji, who defected

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to Jordan this year, said in a recent television interview that President Saddam Husayn started having doubts in 1991.

In the spring of that year, after the end of the second Gulf war, the whole south and most of Iraq's center was virtually in a state of open rebellion against Baghdad. What was surprising was the fact that the military forces stationed in those areas, as well as the Ba'th Party's members, also supported the uprising and refused to quell it. The regime was forced to bring in forces from other parts of the country in order to regain control.

The Iraqi president was also shaken by the defection of over 100 senior officers and political and diplomatic figures during the past five years, including many generals, and last but not least, his late son-in-law Husayn Kamil.

Some analysts say that Saddam Husayn's regime has always relied on the support of some tribes, considering it essential. This is certainly true, up to a point. He is now effectively sharing power with the tribes. The central government will keep total control over key issues such as the economy, foreign policy, and national defense. Otherwise, the many budding shaykhdoms will be able to function as independent entities.

President Saddam Husayn is now concentrating mainly on the Sunni Muslim tribes, and is trying to win over five prominent tribes. The main tribe is likely to be the Shammar tribe, based in the al-Jazirah area near Mosul. There is also the al-Dufayr tribe, whose authority extends from southern Iraq to the borders with Kuwait and the Gulf coast. The third tribe is the 'Anzah tribe which occupies a strategic position west of the Euphrates. There are also the Banu-Asad and al-Dulaym tribes whose main territories cover an arc extending from Baghdad to the borders with Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

The Iraqi president is also trying to revive the tribal structure among the circles of the Christian minority in Iraq, especially the Assyrians and Chaldeans, who, to a large extent, have remained loyal to whoever rules Baghdad.

The tribal strategy becomes ineffective when dealing with the Kurds in the north. Only a small and isolated minority of the Kurdish tribes has accepted cooperation with President Saddam Husayn. In fact, the major Kurdish tribes remain strongly opposed to his regime. Nevertheless, he still hopes to establish some relations with the al-Yazidi Kurds who live along the Syrian border, while all the time courting Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani by offering money, arms, self-rule, and much more.

The Shiite tribes in the south, especially those in the marshes near the Iranian borders, will be harder to win over. There, the traditional tribal structures have largely been protected because of the area's inaccessibility and the successive Baghdad regimes' inability to gain effective control of the marshes.

However, even there the new tribal project is viewed with some interest. Emissaries from Bani-Tarf, Bani-Tumaym, and Bani-Ka'b have visited Baghdad over the past weeks to discuss the new arrangements to establish relations with the central government.

Can this new policy succeed in boosting President Saddam Husayn's regime?

It is too early to tell. There are some factors which are hampering the chances of success. Most Iraqi tribes have a long history of blood feuds with the Iraqi president and most tribal chiefs do not trust him.

Moreover, the tribal chiefs know that they have only been granted these new wide-ranging powers because the central government is incapable of effectively controlling the country. Hence, the chiefs will take whatever they are given without necessarily switching their allegiance to a government for which they have never felt any friendship.

The fact that the new strategy necessitates vast sums to guarantee its success presents another problem. President Saddam Husayn lacks the basic resources for such an ambitious project aimed at buying extensive allegiance.

The partial lifting of the embargo on Iraqi oil might provide the Iraqi president with better resources.

He also promised the chiefs that he would allow them to run the local networks for the distribution of aid to come, and supervise the trade resulting from up to $2 billion in oil sales under UN supervision.

The British, who drafted the Iraqi tribal law and tried to use the chiefs to strike a balance with the disgruntled city dwellers, learned a harsh lesson. The tribal chiefs remained friendly as long as the tide did not run against British rule. When the tide turned in 1941, the chiefs quickly switched allegiance.

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**Israel: Nabulus Declared Closed 'Until Further Notice'**

*TA1505145496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 'Arafat left Bethlehem this afternoon for a visit to Nabulus. The city has been declared a closed security area to Israelis for security reasons until further notice.

**Israel: Closure on Territories Tightened; Goods Allowed Through**

*TA1605045096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The closure on the territories was tightened overnight. All Palestinian workers are now being prevented from entering Israel, although they can go to their jobs at the Erez industrial site and in Judaea and Samaria. Goods and produce can also be transported in both directions at the Qarni and Sufa terminals north of the Gaza Strip. Entry into Israel will be allowed only for VIP's, humanitarian cases, medical teams, the diplomatic corps, and 50 Palestinian reporters who will cover Israel's May 29 elections.

**Israel: Security Forces Arrest 7 Hamas Activists in West Bank**

*TA1505083596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The security forces last night arrested seven men suspected of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activity in various locations in Judaea and Samaria. They were arrested in the Bethlehem, Tulkarm, and Janin areas.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 15 May in a page A5 report by Eytan Rabin cites military sources as saying that "since the Dizengoff Center bombing, more than 5,000 Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists have been arrested. These arrests have prevented two attempted infiltrations into Israel by suicide terrorists."]

**Israel: Hizballah Member With Forged UK Passport Planned Plane Bombing**

*TA1605073396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The security authorities today permitted the airing of a report that the terrorist who died in a bomb explosion in an East Jerusalem hotel approximately one month ago was a Hizballah terrorist who planned to blow up a passenger plane. The terrorist, Husayn Muhammad Maqdad, held a forged British passport. He spent some time in the Iranian Embassy in Beirut, where he was apparently given a sophisticated bomb weighing less than 1 kg. The terrorist came to Israel early last month on a Swissair flight from Switzerland. After spending several days in Tel Aviv he arrived in Jerusalem with the bomb. The explosives were planted in an antenna-shaped pipe. A delay mechanism was discovered among the terrorist's belongings.

Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that following the investigation, security procedures in Israel's ports and airports have been tightened.

**Israel: Extradition of 'Terrorists' From PA Area Demanded, Rejected**

*TA1605105896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel has asked the Palestinian Authority [PA] to extradite to it four terrorists suspected of having carried out attacks within the Green Line. Our correspondent Mikha'el Tuchfeld reports that Justice Minister David Liba'i today submitted the request to Furayh Abu-Middayn in the meeting of the joint legal committee. The PA says that as long as the four are serving a sentence in its territory, they cannot be extradited to Israel.

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**Jordan: King Leaves on 'Brief Visit' to Turkey 16 May**

*JN1605090296 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] With God's care and protection, His Majesty King Husayn left the homeland this morning for Ankara on a brief visit to Turkey. The king will meet with Turkish President Suleyman Demirel and senior Turkish officials. His majesty and the Turkish president will discuss bilateral ties and a number of international and regional issues of mutual concern. [passage omitted]

The king is accompanied by 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, the prime minister; 'Awn al-Khasawinah, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; His Highness Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, military secretary of his majesty the king; Mustafa al-Qaysi, his majesty the king's adviser for national security affairs and rapporteur of the State Security Council; Dr. 'Awad Khulayfat, minister of interior; Dr. Samir Qa'war, minister of water and irrigation; Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, minister of information; and Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

**Jordan: Daily Previews King's 'Significant' Visit to Turkey**

*JN1605083296 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 May 96 pp 1, 28*

[Editorial: "King Husayn's Visit to Ankara"]

[FBIS Translated Text] King Husayn's upcoming visit to Turkey today acquires extraordinary importance. This fact is quite clear to all the observers who closely follow the active diplomatic moves in the Middle East on various levels, especially since these moves intensified recently.

This visit to Ankara comes immediately after the successful tripartite summit in Cairo. It also comes after the dissipation of Arab doubts on the reasons for the presence of Israeli planes in Turkey, as spelled out by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa at the end of his visit [to Turkey] ahead of the trilateral summit.

No doubt, King Husayn's visit to Turkey acquires even greater importance, given the host of issues that will be discussed with Turkish President Suleyman Demirel. Chief among these topics will be the current developments of the peace process and the dangers and challenges it encountered due to the accelerating military developments in southern Lebanon. Further, the Iraqi question, which still draws Jordanian attention that is paralleled only by the Turkish concern, will be tackled by His Majesty King Husayn and President Demirel. Jordan and Turkey are the countries mainly affected by the current Iraqi situation and are the most concerned about any possible developments there in the near future.

In light of this, the Husayn-Demirel summit — which culminates Jordan's active diplomatic efforts in the Arab, regional, and international fora — is a significant event in the Middle East which will be anxiously followed by the concerned parties. It is hoped that the summit will benefit the present and future of the peace process, which requires now more than ever the pooling of the efforts of all the members of the peace camp.

**Jordan: Job Seekers Apply for Visas at Israeli Embassy in Amman**

*JN1505202796 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 15 May 96*

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Hundreds of Jordanians have been trying in recent weeks to apply for employment in Israel. Most of them have applied in hopes of securing high wages.

Over 150 Jordanians daily receive visas to Israel to visit relatives. But an increasing number has been seen outside the embassy offices in recent weeks seeking work opportunities.

An Israeli embassy spokesman said they were not issuing work visas. Commenting to REUTER television on the issue, the civil service director in Amman, 'Abdallah 'Ulayyan, said such lines of job seekers have been seen in the past at Arab Gulf embassies.

[Begin 'Ulayyan recording] To observe this sort of trend at the embassies of Saudi Arabia, Libya, the [United Arab] Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Dubai. But, due to what had been politically taking place for the last five or six years, the direction of the trend had shifted to some other neighboring countries, and Israel is one of them. [end recording]

The Israeli ambassador to Jordan, Shim'on Shamir, said that the policy of Israel and that of Jordan, in his own words, is not to encourage employment of Jordanians in Israel. He said he believed this would lead to friction among Jordanians and Palestinians who take jobs in Israel.

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**Jordan: Official Denies Presence of Extremist Organization**

*NC1605091196 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 6 May 96 p 19*

[Report by Wa'il al-Ibrashi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Khalid al-Madadihah, the Jordanian minister of state for foreign affairs, has insisted that there is no organization in Jordan called "Repudiation and Denunciation."

In exclusive statements to ROSE AL-YUSUF, he said: Information from the Egyptian security services surprised us. We asked them for more information so that we could act, because such a group would be illegal, and, besides, it does not exist anyway. He added: The Egyptian authorities have confirmed what we say.

The Jordanian minister added: We used to have the Islamic Liberation Party; it evolved into the Repudiation and Denunciation Movement but it no longer conducts activities in Jordan.

The Jordanian minister claimed that the security and military agreements between his country and Israel aim only to pursue smugglers along the two countries' border and to enable Jordan to benefit from Israel's technology in combating smuggling and carrying out border monitoring by helicopters. He added: Our border with Israel is long. We suffer greatly from smuggling and it is difficult for us to monitor such an extensive border.

**Jordan: Daily Condemns U.S., UK Attitude Toward 'Plight' of Iraqis**

*JN1605080596 Amman THE STAR in English 16-22 May 96 p 4*

["Our Say...." Column: "UN's Mandate in Iraq is Over"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As millions of Iraqi people await the outcome of the oil-for-food negotiations in New York, which have been dragging aimlessly on and on for months now, the time to reopen the whole UN sanctions file against Iraq could not be more opportune. For we all know by now that the US will find a way to derail the current talks in order to prolong Iraq's seizure.

Ever since the Security Council imposed its wholesale embargo against Iraq as punishment for invading Kuwait there were those, inside and outside the Arab world, who have been calling for their removal or curtailment. But Iraq's attempts to break free from the grip hold of the sanctions, running into their sixth year, have all failed.

In the beginning, the world, still stunned from Iraq's swift invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf War that followed, was ready to tow [toe] the US line and impose the sanctions in the hope that Iraq's arsenal of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction would be dismantled. And it worked. More than four years of gruelling UN inspections and physical destruction of these arsenals, Iraq appears to have complied with all UN resolutions concerning its weapons program. By all accounts, Iraq has nothing to hide anymore and if there is something out there, the meticulous UN inspectors would have stumbled into it by now.

But for many months, the Security Council has been extending the embargo almost automatically, while on the ground UN inspectors appear to be involved in a wild goose chase. Nothing wrong with that if it wasn't for the tremendous and outrageous price that the people of Iraq are paying while waiting for the US and Britain, the only two countries who blindly refuse to even partially lift the embargo, to soften up and decide that enough is enough.

Well enough is enough! We know as well as the whole world that nothing justifies the death of Iraqi babies because of malnutrition, lack of medical supplies in ill-equipped hospitals and polluted drinking water. Nothing justifies the breaking up of a country as proud and rich as Iraq no matter what UN inspectors believe or claim.

We are again reminded of the double standards that the US administration, and unfortunately Britain, apply when dealing with the plight of the Iraqi people. The case today is not about digging up secret labs and underground factories in Iraq, but it is about keeping Iraq weak and ailing for as long as possible. The case today is not about removing the regime of Saddam Husayn, for that is not the mandate of the UN or any other party. The case is not about democracy in Iraq, for that too is not the business of any party but the Iraqi people. The case today is not about finding the whereabouts of missing Kuwaitis, compensation or new borderlines. The case is an anathema to all Arabs. We are sick of America's hypocrisy, UN's inaptitude, Western malaise and Arab impotence in dealing with the Iraqi issue.

That is why the time has come to reopen the case and exhume the dead for a second look. The UN's mandate in Iraq is over. It can continue long-term monitoring, but it must remove its bloody hands from the livelihood of millions of Iraqis. Our leaders, our intellectuals and our politicians must make a stand on this issue. Appeasing our "friends" by looking the other way is making us all accessory to mass murder.

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**Lebanon: Hizballah Refutes Israeli Claims on Bases Abroad**

*NC1505155396 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 3 May 96 p 8*

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah has categorically denied that it has military or security groups or bases outside Lebanon. Hizballah added: "We are duty bound to the option of resistance in Lebanon for the sake of liberating our occupied land from the filth of the Zionist enemy."

These remarks were made by a Hizballah official source in response to claims by the Israeli prime minister and reports he tries to disseminate about alleged activities by Hizballah in several countries.

The source said: It is evident that the Zionist entity and its prime minister, Shim'on Peres, are extremely upset by the dishonoring of Israel's image as a state practicing the most grotesque kinds of terrorism and committing massacres against defenseless civilians. It is also clear that the Zionists are very much disturbed by the way world media have been covering the news of Hizballah as a party defending a legitimate cause and carrying out a legitimate action against the occupation forces. This contradicts the image the Zionist media have been trying to instill in the mind of the world. The enemy prime minister tried to fabricate and disseminate lies in a bid to distract the world from the Zionist entity's failure in its battle against Lebanon and from the massacres committed against the Lebanese people.

It is strange that reports on the arrest of Hizballah groups in various countries were carried by the enemy official and media service. The reports were always dismissed by the countries concerned. This demonstrates the falsehood of these claims, which show the extent of the enemy's bankruptcy in facing Hizballah.

**Lebanon: Hizballah Spokesman Denies Link With Hotel Bomb Suspect**

*NC1605100696 Paris AFP in English 0931 GMT 16 May 96*

[Report by David Millikin]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Jerusalem, May 16 (AFP)—A Hizballah guerrilla from Lebanon slipped into the heart of Israel undetected by police carrying sophisticated explosives to blow up an El Al airliner, officials revealed on Thursday [16 May].

The man was captured only after a bomb he was preparing exploded in his hands on April 12 in an east Jerusalem hotel room, blowing off his two legs and right hand, police said.

Forced by court order to break a month-long news blackout on the affair, police identified the suspect as Husayn Muhammad Husayn Miqdad, a Lebanese Shiite Muslim who security agents said was close to Hizballah's spiritual leader, Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah. [passage omitted]

In Beirut, the Iranian-backed Hizballah denied any involvement in the would-be bomb attack on an Israeli plane. "Hizballah categorically denies any link with the person" who blew himself up in east Jerusalem, a spokesman for the group told AFP.

**Lebanon: Israeli Forces Bombard Western al-Biqa' Areas**

*NC1505134596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The occupation forces resumed shelling of the liberated areas overlooking western al-Biqa', particularly the hills of al-Trayri, al-Qatrani, and Birkat al-Jabbur at 1300 [1000 GMT] today. Shells are falling on these areas at the rate of 10 shells per minute. The shelling continues.

**Lebanon: Israeli Overflights, Ambush Reported**

*NC1605110696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli helicopters overflew the Shab'a-Janta front in the eastern sector for two hours this morning.

An Israeli force last night set up an ambush at the eastern entrance to Shab'a, that is, 500 meters inside the liberated areas. The force raked the western slopes of Mount Hermon with machine guns before withdrawing to its positions in Jabal al-Sawwanah.

A unit from the Agent militia [South Lebanese Army] raided Shab'a and searched the homes of citizens from the Hamdan clan.

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**Syria: 'Source' Cited on Monitoring Committee Meeting, Topics**

*JN1505124496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington — Representatives of the states taking part in the monitoring committee emerging from the April understanding will today continue the discussions that they started in Washington yesterday, when they held a five-hour meeting to discuss the topics listed on the agenda.

Julie Reside, U.S. State Department spokeswoman, said that the participants in yesterday's meeting exerted strenuous efforts to prepare this committee.

A source close to the Washington meeting said that the representatives of the five states could not reach agreement on a number of points, including the chairmanship and composition of the committee and the investigation arrangements should any border violations take place. The source said that selecting the Lebanese town of al-Naqurah as the committee's headquarters will not pose a problem. The issue of the committee chairmanship was not discussed in detail during yesterday's meeting, the source said, adding that this will be one of the important points in the follow-up meeting today. France had proposed that the committee chairmanship be rotational and in partnership with the United States.

Among the points that the participants in the meeting are supposed to specify is how to conduct investigations in case a confrontation takes place. Should the parties agree to the idea of the participation of civilian and military representatives in the committee, the rate of such participation will be specified.

**Syria: Paper Criticizes U.S. 'Rush' To Form Monitoring Committee**

*JN1605110996 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0800 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 16 May (SANA)— The newspaper AL-BA'TH expresses its astonishment at the media reports regarding the U.S. Administration's emphasis on the need to expedite the formation of the monitoring committee, which was agreed in the April Understanding, as well as the need not to negotiate forever.

AL-BA'TH wonders: Why the rush and why expedite the committee's formation at time when there is a slowing down of the peace process? Why does the United States prefer to rush and not to negotiate forever on the monitoring committee while not asking for expediting the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425?

In an editorial today by its chief editor Dr. Turki Saqr, the paper says: The implementation of Resolution 425 will save the United States and other concerned countries the trouble of addressing a host of extremely sensitive issues, such as the issues of violence and the monitoring committee.

AL-BA'TH adds: Ending the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon will save the United States its preoccupation with many issues and situations resulting from the occupation and the Lebanese national resistance, which was a result of this occupation. So, why does the United States not activate the theory of not negotiating forever regarding the implementation of Resolution 425?

AL-BA'TH says: The United States, which sympathizes with the Israeli concerns, is concerned over the fact that the Israeli occupation forces are subjected to resistance actions, which kill or wound Israeli troops. Likewise, the continued encroachments on Lebanon's sovereignty, the attacks against Lebanese territory, and the perpetration of crimes against civilians also worry the Lebanese people, the Arabs, and the world public opinion.

It would be beneficial if the United States removes this concern by convincing Israel to accept and implement Resolution 425. Once the occupation ends, many problems and grave concerns will end.

As far as negotiating forever is concerned, the paper adds: Is it not the right of those concerned about the peace process to ask why the negotiations on the ceasefire monitoring committee should not last forever, while the talks on the fundamental issue in the Middle East — establishing a just and comprehensive peace go on and on without coming to an end?

AL-BA'TH goes on to say: Syria cooperated with the United States in order to turn former U.S. President George Bush's initiative into a peacemaking process in the Middle East. Similarly, it cooperated with President Bill Clinton's administration, who admitted in front of the world mass media that Syria wants peace and cooperates to establish it.

However, the U.S. commitment to peace fluctuates according to various factors, not all of which are positive. At times, one believes there are certain powers that work under the influence of factors that are seemingly incompatible with the official U.S. commitment. If this is not the case, how can one understand the fact that the maneuvers that took place throughout the past years to mire the peace process are continuing?

Concluding its commentary, the paper says that the United States should be responsibile for its initiative. It adds: What makes this responsibility even greater is that

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what took place outside the framework of official talks of the peace process, in dark alleys, and through separate talks with certain parties resulted in neither a just and comprehensive peace nor tangible progress toward this end.

**Syria: Paper—U.S. Can Persuade Israel To Implement UN Resolution**

*JN1605103496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 16 May 96*

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial, AL-BA'TH stresses that the United States can persuade Israel to do whatever it thinks is right and has the means to do so inside Israel. The paper says: When the United States is convinced of the need to implement UN Security Council Resolution 425, the Israeli Government — regardless of whether it is a so-called hawks or doves government — will undoubtedly be convinced of the same thing.

AL-BA'TH says: If the Lebanese resistance attacks against Israeli occupation troops and the victims they leave behind are a cause of worry to the United States, which sympathizes with the Israeli worries, then the constant aggression against Lebanon's sovereignty and territory and the crimes against the Lebanese civilians are a cause of worry to the Lebanese, the Arabs, and the world public opinion.

AL-BA'TH adds: It would be a good thing if the United States can put an end to these worries by persuading Israel to accept and implement Resolution 425. When the occupation ends, several problems, several worries, and a great concern will also end.

AL-BA'TH says: The U.S. commitment to the peace process, which was underlined on the president's level, is prone to several factors, not all of which are positive. Whenever this commitment drops to a low level, one may think that there are certain powers that act under the influence of factors that do not always agree with the apparent official U.S. commitment that was made on the president's level. Otherwise, how can one understand the fact that maneuvers aimed at obstructing the peace process are continuing.

**Syria: Israel Accused of Circumventing Lebanon Understanding**

*JN1505135296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 15 May 96*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: There is nothing new in Israeli policy. Israel continues to tighten its siege on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, while its military machine continues its provocation and aggression against southern Lebanon. In Washington, the Israeli delegation is trying to circumvent the Lebanon understanding and undermine the follow-up committee, in terms of its form, content, and methods of operation.

By pursuing this policy, Israel continues to terrorize the region and its people. The siege is leading to demoralization, which hurts more than the actual killing and destruction Israel is practicing in southern Lebanon. All of this will undermine the peace process and the prospects for saving the region from bloody conflicts and grudges.

A peace killer cannot possibly be a peacemaker. Israel's justifications for its practices and actions are convincing to no one. Palestinian resistance to the occupation existed before the peace process. Throughout their struggle and uprisings, the Palestinians offered much blood and many victims for freedom and independence. This holds true for the Lebanese national resistance, which is the effect, not the cause, of occupation. The lack of peace in the region is caused by the continuation of occupation. In fact, ending occupation is one of the reasons the peace process was initiated. Israel, however, does not countenance this logic because it views peace as its own peace and wants to achieve through it what it failed to achieve by force, killing, and destruction. Israel wants a peace that does not end its occupation, control, and domination. The peace Israel has in mind should expand the margin of occupation, control, and domination to include the entire region.

What must be said is that this policy is not viable. The Arab people will not accept anything short of a just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy. If Israel truly wants peace, all it has to do is accept, clearly and unequivocally, international legitimacy and its resolutions, which constitute the foundation of the peace process and the Madrid conference. The international community, especially the United States, as a sponsor and partner, should pressure Israel and force it to accept a just and comprehensive peace. They should also force Israel to stop the aggression and other practices that threaten peace and create more tension in the region, which could threaten world peace and security.

**Syria: Paper Views Israel's 'Ultimate Objective'**

*JN1505122696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 15 May 96*

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial today entitled "The Usurpation Anniversary and Arab Rights," the

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newspaper AL-BA'TH says: The anniversary of the usurpation of Palestine coincides with the Arab rush toward the usurper, Israel. It also coincides with the increasing U.S. insistence on disavowing Arab rights in the interest of Israel.

AL-BA'TH believes that rendering the Palestinians homeless was not the end of Israel's strategy. Perhaps, the Qana massacre, the forcible expulsion of half a million Lebanese citizens, and the description of Arabs as human garbage are signs implying that a serious future awaits the Arabs if the Arab situation remains as it is now.

AL-BA'TH asserts that the Israeli aspiration for a Middle East devoid of Arabs represents the ultimate objective sought by Zionism. Israel and those defending its intentions and aspirations are also seeking this objective.

AL-BA'TH points out that the United States used the veto in defense of Israel more than 70 times, and that it blocked draft resolutions by threatening to use the veto more than a hundred times. Israel will thus continue to pose dangers to the Arabs both now and in the future. The United States will not antagonize Israel even if the Arabs present daily sacrifices to the United States. This is the secret behind Israel's defiance of UN resolutions.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: All that is happening confirms that Israel wants only its own kind of peace and that some parties are supporting it in this regard. The position on Israel's crime in the Lebanese township of Qana was clear at the Security Council. The whole world acknowledged that Israel is a force of aggression and that it is occupying others' territory but the United States does not acknowledge this fact. Does this mean that the United States is governed by the Israeli decisionmaking, or does it mean that the United States harbors other intentions?

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## Afghanistan

### Afghanistan: Fighting Reportedly Ebbs; People Killed, Wounded

*LD1405212796 Tehran IRNA in English 2115 GMT 14 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, May 14, IRNA — The fighting which erupted in Wardag Province between the Taleban militia and the joint forces of the Afghan Government and Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] of Golboddin Hekmatyar, has largely subsided.

The government and Hekmatyar forces in their first joint encounter since forming an alliance last week, have succeeded in driving the Taleban out of the two key towns of Dehmirdad and Chak in southwestern Wardag.

Afghan Defence Ministry spokesman, Amrullah, said the Taleban which launched several counter-attacks is holding only the town of Chak, while the greater part of Dehmirdad is under control of the state forces.

He said sporadic fighting was still going on, but the intensity of the clashes has subsided.

Tens of people were killed or wounded in the past four days in Afghanistan. The joint forces led by General Muzaffareddin captured 25 Taleban militiamen along with tens of heavy weapons and a large amount of ammunition.

The target of the joint operation of the state forces and the Hezb-e Eslami was to capture the supply route of Ghazni-Maidanshar in order to isolate the Taleban militia in the provincial capital, Maidanshar. The target has not yet been achieved, he conceded.

Unconfirmed reports said the Taleban has gone on rampage in the town of Chak killing defenceless people after taking over the town.

The reports said the Taleban is committing murder and loot in Chak against those it accuses of supporting the state forces which briefly controlled the town during the four-day offensive.

### Afghanistan: Pakistani Islamist Claims U.S. Intervening in Afghanistan

*LD1505210696 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States is trying to prepare the ground for direct intervention in Afghanistan's affairs. This point was made in an interview with Qazi Hussain Ahmad, leader of Pakistan's Jam'iyat-e Eslami party. He said: By direct interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, the United States is trying to remove from office Mahmoud Mestiri, special envoy of the UN secretary general for Afghanistan, and to appoint another person instead, in order to prepare the ground for direct intervention in Afghan affairs.

Esteemed Qazi Hussain Ahmad added: Efforts are currently being made to effect the consolidation of peace and security in Afghanistan and for the establishment of a strong government.

Regarding talks between the Afghan jihadi formations he said: Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party, led by Hekmatyar], Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society, led by Rabbani], Ettehad-e Eslami [Islamic Union party, led by Sayyaf], Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity, Shiite party], and some other formations have announced their support [words indistinct].

About the future composition of government in Afghanistan he said: The Hezb-e Eslami, members of the High Coordination Council, Kabul's government, Taleban, and other Afghan groups will take part in this government.

### Afghanistan: Taleban Leader Claims Iran Pledged Friendly Relations

*LD1505221396 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Mullah Mohammad Omar has said that the Afghan problem cannot be resolved through talks and understanding. This point has been expressed by Mullah Mohammad Omar, the leader of the Taleban, in an interview with a Pakistani newspaper, JANG.

He said: Rabbani and Hekmatyar fought for the realization of their own goals. It is for this purpose that they are trying to form an alliance, and they will continue to fight to protect their interests.

On relations with Iran he said: Taleban have held talks with Tehran. Iran has pledged friendly relations with the Taleban. Denying an alliance with Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party], Mullah Mohammad Omar said: Taleban have not formed an alliance with Wahdat-e Eslami but they have proposed to us a surrender of their weapons and area to us.

On relations with Islamic countries he said that after achieving our jehad's goals, our groups will establish relations with those countries.

On Pakistan's assistance to the Taleban, Mullah Mohammad Omar said: Taleban have no connection with any organ of the government of Pakistan including the Inter Services Intelligence. Our purpose is not to [words indistinct] in Afghanistan. Our purpose is to enforce shari'ah law in Afghanistan.

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## Bangladesh

### Bangladesh: Upcoming Elections 'Most Significant' Since Independence

*BK1605021996 Dhaka JANAKANTHA in Bengali 3 May 96 p 4*

[Editorial: "The Upcoming General Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At last, general elections will be held in the country under a nonparty caretaker government. After many martyrs' sacrifices and ups and downs in national life, elections will be held on 12 June. The election schedule was announced by the chief election commissioner in his first address to the nation over radio and television on 27 April. According to the schedule, 12 May is the last date for filing nomination papers, 13 May is the day of scrutiny, and 18 May is the last date for the withdrawal of nomination papers. After this, the final list of candidates will be published. Elections will be held for Parliament's 300 seats in one day. The electoral list has already been updated, but unregistered names can be included on the list up until the last minute.

A new polarization of political parties might emerge before the elections. The rejoining and switching of parties has already begun. The trend is to contest the election on the basis of the separate identities of the respective political parties. Although the Bangladesh National Party [BNP] has urged the establishment of a nationalist alliance, it was unable to evoke any significant response and it seems that the coming election will bear the influence of the recent street agitation.

It goes without saying that the coming election is the most significant of all elections held since independence. The 1991 election held under the Shahabuddin government after the overthrow of autocratic rule was acclaimed by the whole world as a historic election. It was a historic election in that it was held in a free, fair, and impartial manner. That election brought an end to the prolonged autocratic rule and led to the unanimous passage of the 12th Constitutional Amendment Bill by the fifth Parliament, thereby heralding a historic march toward parliamentary democracy.

Unfortunately, halfway through the fifth Parliament, the country was faced with an unprecedented political crisis. The task of institutionalizing parliamentary democracy could not be started when the whole nation was required to protect the nascent parliamentary democracy. Nothing could be done for the independence of the judiciary; establishing the rule of law; ridding educational campuses of terrorism and illegal weapons; ensuring the accountability, transparency, and neutrality of parliamentary government and the administration; making the administration corruption-free; activating the parliamentary committees and enabling them to play their desired role; establishing the sovereignty of Parliament; conducting trials for political murders; banning religious politics; and fulfilling the people's other expectations and aspirations. On the contrary, obstructions were created to the fulfillment of those demands. The political transition became meaningless.

It was at this point of the fifth Parliament that the opposition staged a walkout from the house over an unwarranted sarcastic remark by the information minister. Later, the situation became further aggravated by rigging during several by-elections. This led to an unsurmountable situation marked by the continuous boycott of Parliament by the opposition MP's and their mass resignation. A one-point demand for holding free, fair, and impartial elections under a neutral and nonparty government was raised by the main opposition Awami League. Over time — through strikes, seizures, blockades, and relentless noncooperation over the last two years — the opposition demand was transformed into the people's demand. The ruling party made a futile attempt to cling to power by conducting an election on 15 February. It was virtually a one-party rigged election. This resulted in large-scale bloodshed and disturbances in the country. Encountering the popular uprising, the BNP was ultimately forced to accept the validity of the opposition's main demand, thereby acknowledging the fact that under the prevailing situation it was not possible to ensure free, fair, and impartial elections if they were held under a party government.

In an attempt to maintain the party's image and ensure its chances of returning to power through future elections, the ruling BNP hurriedly and illegally passed the 13th Amendment to the Constitution through the illegal one-party Parliament. Although it enshrined in the Constitution for the first time that all future elections would be held under a nonparty caretaker government, some provisions that ran contrary to the spirit of parliamentary democracy — such as keeping the Defense Ministry and the Armed Forces Department with the president and depriving the caretaker government of executive and policymaking powers — were retained. As the main demand for conducting the elections under a caretaker government was fulfilled, the opposition welcomed the formation of a nonparty caretaker government despite the flaw in the 13th Amendment, which the opposition plans to rectify in the future.

The ruling BNP termed the formation of the caretaker government a victory and welcomed it. The 11-member caretaker government was formed by the president with 10 advisers and retired Chief Justice Mohammad

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Habibur Rahman as chief adviser. The day the caretaker government assumed office, it began to work to recover illegal arms, arrest terrorists, and boost the country's economy. It also started working to create a conducive atmosphere for conducting free, fair, and impartial elections. Although the desired success could not be achieved in the drive to recover illegal arms and explosives, the drive is being pursued and awards have been announced to make it successful.

From the very beginning, the caretaker government and the Election Commission, which was reconstituted later, were assured of wholehearted cooperation by all parties. The agitation in 1990 was mainly urban-based, but the recent agitation spread to rural areas as well. This might have a positive impact on the coming elections. The voters and political parties will be taking part in the coming elections keeping in view the factors that rendered the fifth Parliament inoperative and the bloody background leading to the controversy over the legitimacy of the 15 February elections and the sixth Parliament. It is hoped that there will not be any vote- buying this time and the people will firmly resist the practice of using money, muscle power and arms, communalism, false voting, rigging, and other maneuvering. It is also hoped that people will not let anyone deprive them of their right to vote and to vote for anyone they like during the 12 June elections. A similar appeal has been made to the voters by Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena. He says the nation is facing a crucial test and must pass it successfully.

## India

### India: Vajpayee Sworn in; Third Party Reacts

*BK1605092396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A 12-member BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]- Shiv Sena government headed by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee has assumed office. The president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, administered the oath of office at a simple ceremony at the Ashoka Hall of Rashtrapati Bhavan [president house] this afternoon. Mr. Vajpayee, the 11th prime minister of the country, took the oath in Hindi. The 11 cabinet ministers sworn in are: Mr. Sikander Bakht, Mr. Suraj Bhan, Mr. Ram Jethmalani, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Mr. V. Dhananjay Kumar, Mr. Promod Mahajan, Mr. (Karia Munda), Mr. Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu, Mr. Sartaj Singh, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and Mrs. Sushma Swaraj. Mr. Prabhu belongs to the Shiv Sena.

The vice president, Mr. K.R. Narayanan; the outgoing prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao; former prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar; the BJP president, Mr. L.K. Advani; the speaker of the dissolved Lok Sabha, Mr. Shivraj Patil; the chief justice, Mr. A.M. Ahmadi; and election commissioners, Mr. G.V.G. Krishnamurthy and Dr. M.S. Gill, were among those present on the occasion. Several ministers of the outgoing government were also present.

Leaders from National Front and left parties did not attend the function.

In an informal chat with newspersons, the new prime minister said his government will provide a clean administration and will be sensitive to the problems and aspirations of the people. Mr. Vajpayee was confident of proving the majority of his government on the floor of the house on or before the 31st of this month. He also said that his government will go by the policy of national consensus.

The U.S. ambassador to India, Mr. Frank Wisner, has assured full support and cooperation to the BJP government headed by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. Speaking at a function organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry, Mr. Wisner expressed the hope that the new government will successfully face the challenges of achieving sustainable economic growth simultaneously and ensuring environmental protection.

Australia says it will work closely with the new government. A spokesman in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. (Paul Mauli), said in Sydney that his government will continue to explore actively the investment opportunities in India.

The Third Front leaders have demanded the convening of the Lok Sabha session immediately to prove Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee has majority. Talking to newspersons after the leaders' meeting in New Delhi today, the Janata Dal spokesman, Mr. Jaipal Reddy, said the meeting was also of the view that Mr. Vajpayee should secure a vote of confidence without transacting any other business in the house. A 14-member coordination committee under the leadership of Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda is also to be constituted to coordinate the activities of the front partners for the next 15 days. Mr. Reddy described as unjustified the time given to Mr. Vajpayee to prove his majority and said this will lead to horse trading.

### India: Rao Makes Farewell Address to Nation

*BK1505151996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1503 GMT 15 May 96*

[Address to the nation by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao; place and date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] My countrymen: The elections for the 11th Lok Sabha have been completed. You have

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exercised your prerogative and given your verdict. You had given me and my party the privilege and the honor of serving this country for the last five years. You have now given a different verdict. We accept your decision with humility.

My government has steadfastly pursued the national goals of unity, integrity, secularism, and stability. We pledge ourselves afresh at this juncture to continue the pursuit of these goals. We have always endeavored to alleviate and eventually end poverty and to sustain a rapid rate of growth. Whether in power or out of it, we pledge to continue with this interconnected twin objective.

I have immense faith in the destiny of India and the capacity of our countrymen in fulfilling this destiny. India is on the threshold of emerging as one of the giants in the 21st century. We rededicate ourselves to that great event.

I have long accepted the service of the nation as my only mission. I have received love and affection from you all in abundance. That has sustained me and helped in my endeavors. I pray to God to enable me to carry on my mission. I do not have appropriate words to express my gratitude to you. My best wishes to you all as always.

Thank you.

Jai Hind [hail India].

**India: Vajpayee on Call To Form Government**

*BK1505162396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has said that it is accepting the invitation of the president to Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee to form the government at the center. A resolution adopted by the party's parliamentary board and central office-bearers in New Delhi thanked the president for upholding the Constitution. It said the mandate of the 1996 general election is for a change of government, decentralization and against corruption. Describing the taking over of the BJP-led coalition tomorrow as a new chapter in the history of the nation, the party appealed to all to join in its endeavor to realize a resurgent, prosperous and peaceful India in which goodwill and amity will prevail. Our correspondent M.P. Radhakrishnan reports on the developments:

[Begin recording] [Radhakrishnan] Speculations about who would be the country's next prime minister ended soon after 1400 this afternoon when the BJP leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, went to Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] to meet the president. There was expectation in the air. Reporters waited anxiously outside. It was Mr. Vajpayee himself who announced the news:

[Vajpayee in Hindi] The president has appointed me as the prime minister and my council of ministers will take oath tomorrow.

[Radhakrishnan] The decision of the president came within minutes of the constitution of the 11th Lok Sabha. Just a few minutes before, the Congress also took its decision to extend support to the other aspirant for the prime minister's chair, Mr. Deve Gowda, representing the Third Front.

At a crowded news conference later, Mr. Vajpayee said his party has taken up the challenge of proving majority in the house.

[Vajpayee] President acted keeping in mind the highest traditions of democratic functioning and parliamentary conventions. We have been invited to form the government and we have been given a time schedule. We have to prove our majority on the floor of the house by 31st of May. We hope to do it even earlier. [end recording]

Responding to questions, Mr. Vajpayee said the BJP is in favor of the policy of cooperation and not confrontation. He asserted that there will not be any discrimination on the basis of religion, region, caste, or class. He decried those who criticized the president's decision to invite the BJP to form the government and said the people's verdict should be respected by all. He said the president has only upheld the conventions and the highest traditions of democracy.

On the Ram Mandir [temple] issue, he said the party went to the polls with a clear commitment in its manifesto for the construction of the temple. He said the issue will be resolved by seeking cooperation of all communities and also keeping in mind the position in the court.

[Hong Kong AFP in English at 1500 GMT on 15 May adds the following remarks made by the BJP leader: "No country should have nuclear weapons. Those with nuclear weapons should listen to us," said Vajpayee, a former foreign minister. "If nuclear bombs get piled up, then we will take whatever measures necessary for our defense." "We want to make India strong, to make India's border secure," he said. "Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir really and rightfully belongs to India," he said]

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**India: Vajpayee Confident of Proving His Majority in Lok Sabha**

*BK1605040196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister designate, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has expressed his confidence of proving his majority on the floor of the Lok Sabha by the deadline set by the president or even earlier. Addressing a crowded press conference in New Delhi last evening, he said the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]-led coalition government will seek the support of all members of parliament.

A resolution adopted by the BJP Parliamentary Board and central office bearers in New Delhi has thanked the president for upholding the Constitution by inviting Mr. Vajpayee to form the government.

Meanwhile, the left parties are meeting in the capital today to discuss the latest developments following the president's invitation to Mr. Vajpayee. The national secretary of the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], Mr. Atal Kumar Anjan, said that representatives of the CPI [Communist Party of India], the Forward Bloc, and the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] will take part in the meeting. As reported, the leaders of the Third Front have objected to the invitation to Mr. Vajpayee to form the government.

After an informal meeting of the Congress Working Committee and senior party leaders in New Delhi, the Congress announced that it will vote against the Vajpayee government at the time of the confidence motion. The meeting also decided to lend unconditional support to the front led by Mr. H.D. Devi Gowda. Mr. Devi Gowda has been unanimously elected leader of the Janata Dal Parliamentary Party.

**India: Sharma Asked To 'Review' Vajpayee's Appointment**

*BK1505150096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Third Front leaders have reacted to the president's decision to invite the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to form a new government at the center. In a statement, the leaders have said that the decision will open doors for horse trading. Expressing surprise over the decision, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] Politburo has said that the president should have invited Mr. Devi Gowda, who has support of over 300 MP's.

In a separate statement, the CPI [Communist Party of India] said that the BJP's claim to the president was not genuine.

In another statement, the All India Indira Congress-Tiwari group has blamed the Congress president, Mr. Narasimha Rao, for the president's invitation to Mr. Vajpayee. The party said Mr. Rao betrayed the secular forces by not fully endorsing the support to be given to Mr. Devi Gowda.

The Third Front leaders have requested the president, Dr. SDhankar Dayal Sharma, to review his position of inviting the BJP leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to form the government at the center. A request to this effect was made by the front leaders when they met Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma at Rashtrapati Bhavan [president's house] today. Earlier, the top leaders of the Front met at an emergency session immediately on hearing the president's decision.

**India: Radio Reports Reaction on Vajpayee's Premiership**

*BK1505162596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Several reactions have come in on the president's decision [to invite BJP's Vajpayee to form government]. Welcoming it, senior party leader of the Shiv Sena, Mr. Subhash Desai, said in Mumbai [Bombay] today that Mr. Vajpayee will prove majority on the floor of the house in the given timeframe.

The president of the All India Minorities Front, Mr. S.M. Asif, said that the verdict given by the people of the country has been honored.

The Industry sector has hailed the appointment of Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. The spokesman of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry said it will extend full cooperation to the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government. The president of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry — FICCI — said that Mr. Vajpayee will ensure the continuity of economic reforms. Noted jurist and constitutional expert, Mr. Nani Palkiwala, has called the president's decision as the most sensible and value-based decision.

## Iran

**Iran: Rafsanjani Returns From Ashgabat Summit**

*LD1505155896 Tehran IRNA in English 1426 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 15, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Wednesday

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[15 May] said that the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) has undergone a major evolution, adding that the organization has now entered a new phase of its activities.

Speaking to reporters upon arrival at Mehrabad International Airport from Ashgabat ECO summit meet, the president said that talks were held at the meeting on bilateral and multilateral cooperation and that numerous documents were prepared to be exchanged.

He said that heads of state of ECO member countries appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for having voluntarily undertaken to implement the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway project at its own cost.

The president said that given the 300-million-strong population of ECO member states with some enjoying rich energy resources, the organization is expected to find its real status at international forums as soon as possible.

As for bilateral talks with Turkmen officials, he referred to the implementation of two giant projects in Turkmenistan by Iran and said that for the first time a 50-km freeway would be built in the republic with Iran being the contractor.

Moreover, he added, the Iranian Telecommunication Company has won an international tender for the implementation of an optic fiber project in Turkmenistan, adding that all countries would be capable of exchanging data through the system.

The president added that once operational by 1997-98, some 20 countries, including China and Germany, would make use of the system.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the president ruled out the possibility of any hostile measure by the U.S. against Iran to cover up Washington's disappointment at the successful implementation of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway project by Iranian experts.

He remarked that the previous U.S. moves aginst Iran had fully failed and gained no other results but humiliation for Washington.

Heads of state and world officials who attended the opening ceremony of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway, repeatedly stressed that by having implemented the project Iran proved that it is invulnerable, the president said.

However, he noted, one should be careful because the enmity of the global arrogance, especially by the U.S., with Islam and Iran had not come to an end.

**Iran: Habibi, Visiting Chinese Minister Discuss Cooperation**

*LD1505132296 Tehran IRNA in English 1232 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 15, IRNA — Visiting Chinese Railways Minister Han Zhubin and First Vice-President Hasan Habibi explored ways of expanding commercial and economic cooperation between Iran and China here Wednesday [15 May], particularly in the area of transportation and telecommunications.

Han congratulated the Iranian Government and nation on the inauguration of the strategic Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen rail track, saying that the opening of the rail link revived the memories of the ancient Silk Road and traditional ties between Iran and China.

Following the commissioning of the silk railway effective steps would be taken towards expansion of the trade and economy in the region and between Asia and Europe, he said.

Terming as "outstanding" Iran's engineering and technical know-how in the areas of transportation and telecommunication technology, the Chinese minister said that China would spare no efforts to promote political, economic and commercial cooperation with Iran.

On his part, Habibi said that the silk railway belonged to all the regional nations and served as a bridge of "friendship" for them.

As for Iran's future programs for expansion of communication routes in the country, Habibi said that the regional states should realize the plan to establish a big economic market in the region using the Silk Road in order to meet one another's needs.

Referring to the traditional bonds between Iran and China, Habibi said that expansion of cooperation in various sectors concerning refining of oil derivatives, manufacture of electronic devices and medical instruments, chemical and pharmaceuticals and promotion of communication routes and transportation equipment were among areas in which the two countries could cooperate.

Moreover, he referred to the plots hatched by the U.S. against the independent states in the region and said that Iran, China and Syria as well as other regional states would succeed in preventing alien powers from meddling in their internal affairs through talks and exchange of views.

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**Iran: PRC Railways Minister on Revival of Silk Route**

*LD1505214696 Tehran IRNA in English*
*1851 GMT 15 May*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 15, IRNA — Minister of Railways of the People's Republic of China, Han Zhubin, in a meeting with Iran's vice-president for executive affairs, Mohammad Hashemi, on Wednesday [15 May] appreciated Iran's efforts for revival of the strategic silk road by linking its railway network to that of Central Asia and China.

The Chinese minister praised Iran's success in laying the railroad and described the inaugurating ceremonies of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen track as "magnificent".

The opening ceremony of the railway link, that would facilitate Central Asian countries and even China to transit their trade through Iranian ports on the Persian Gulf, was attended by 11 heads of state and senior officials from 40 other countries. Han briefed Hashemi on the progress of the plans agreed upon by the two countries and the results of his talks in Tehran as well as his inspection of Iranian factories.

**Iran: Sierra Leone Opens Embassy in Tehran**

*LD1505212796 Tehran IRNA in English*
*2104 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 15, IRNA — The embassy of Sierra Leone opened in Tehran on Wednesday [15 May] in the presence of the visiting Sierra Leonean Secretary of State for Marine Resources Lawrence Kamara. Kamara hoped that relations between Iran and Sierra Leone would develop in light of the historical bonds between the two nations.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab-African Affairs, Hoseyn Sheykholeslam, who was also present at the opening ceremony, said the embassy would serve to develop relations between Iran and the third world countries especially with African states. He said the Islamic Republic of Iran has opened 11 embassies in east and west Africa, and the African states have also opened their embassies in Iran. He said Iran has made efforts to enhance the level of trade exchange with the African nations and has plans to procure its needs from Africa directly and export its goods to African states at competitive prices.

Sheykholeslam said Iran has extended humanitarian service to the African nations through setting up of clinics and medical care centers free of charge while the Construction Jihad has carried out agricultural and rural development projects in the African states.

Sierra Leonean Ambassador to Tehran, Mrs. Hoja Alarie Awantw Cole who is the first female diplomat in Iran said, "we are witnessing promotion of the rights of women in Iran." She hoped that great strides would be made in expansion of ties between the two nations.

**Iran: Lithuanian Transport Minister Wants Closer Ties**

*LD1505222796 Tehran IRNA in English*
*2110 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 15 (IRNA) — In a meeting with Iranian First Vice President Hassan Habibi, the visiting Lithuanian Minister of Transport Jonas Birziskis expressed willingness of his country to join the 'Silk Railroad.'

The Lithuanian minister who attended the opening ceremony of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Taedzhen Railroad, described the strategic project as "glorious" and said Lithuania attaches special importance to its ties with Iran and would make use of all possible means and ways in this respect.

He referred to proper grounds for promoting bilateral ties in the fields of politics, economics and trade, and noted that establishment of air and rail links helps bring about the desired promotion of ties between the two countries.

He termed as fruitful his discussions with Iranian officials and said his country is willing to use Iran's experiences in the fields of economy, technical affairs and commerce.

Habibi said in reply that the independence of Lithuania has paved the way for cooperation between the two countries and that expansion of relations with eastern and central European countries as well as Lithuania is considered as an important factor in Iran's foreign policy.

He added that development of air and rail links between the two countries will have great effect on extending bilateral cooperation.

Habibi also noted that participation of Lithuania in Tehran's annual international trade exhibition could be a good opportunity for merchants of Iran and central Asia to become acquainted with the economic and commercial potentials of Lithuania.

Lithuania on the Baltic Sea could use the new railway connection for trade via Iran's ports on the Persian Gulf.

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**Iran: Sudanese Leader al-Turabi Praises Role of IRNA**

*LD1605083396 Tehran IRNA in English 0618 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, May 16, IRNA — Speaker of Sudanese National A-ssembly, Hasan al-Turabi, stressed that the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC NEWS AGENCY (IRNA) should be turned into a major international news pole.

He told IRNA correspondent here on Wednesday [16 May] that IRNA is the reliable source of news and information for Muslims. He added that the news agency as the channel linking the Islamic world should be turned into a major news gathering network.

He added that in the world of news and information, IRNA is considered a great Islamic value and Muslims rely on IRNA for unbiased and authentic news since the news agency reflects messages and realities of the Muslim world.

The Sudanese speaker also called on IRNA to increase its presence in all Islamic countries.

**Iran: Article Views Israeli Shelling of Qana, U.S. Support**

*LD1505163596 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 12 May 96 p 2*

[Article by Yousef Gh. Gharavi: "Viewpoint: USA-Israeli Nexus"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The recent UN report on the Qana massacre, blaming Israeli forces for the deadly shelling of a UN compound, once again is a pointer to the real face of terrorism of the Israeli regime and its long history of mind-boggling atrocities on the defenceless people in the region.

In fact, the whole process of "Operation Grapes of Wrath" launched by Tel Aviv was part of its intimidation policies in order to pressure and subdue its opponents in the so-called peace process.

No doubt the massacre of refugees sheltered in the UN compound in Qana, comes along with the long and ceaseless chain of violence and human suffering that the Israeli regime has been waging since its illegal establishment in the first half of this century.

As usual, Israeli officials not only rejected the UN report but also accused it for having 'failed' to inform Israel that refugees were sheltering the UN camp. Which means that the intentions of Israel from the start were to bomb the UN compound, as against all international norms.

This point was clearly made by the UNIFIL spokesman in Lebanon who said: "From the beginning of Grapes of Wrath we told the Israelis, I told them personally, that about 6,000 Lebanese civilians were sheltering inside our positions. Anyway, civilians or no civilians, they are not allowed to shell UN positions."

Ironically, the Israeli army's own enquiry concluded that "an out-of-date map and miscalculation by artillery gunners" led to the tragedy.

In another development, despite the fact that the international body's report concluded that Israeli gunners had deliberately targeted the UN camp, the U.S. administration has put its weight behind Tel Aviv by trying to justify the ugly Zionist action in south Lebanon. The stiff defence of Israel by the USA and Clinton's role in dismissing the UN enquiry, leaves no doubt that the U.S. administration is working blindly to defend the illegitimate goals of the Zionist regime.

Look at what Clinton says: "I would remind you, people make mistakes in war times". It appears that Clinton has borne the responsibilities of the defence ministry of Israel to justify the deadly onslaught on Qana.

This biased and partial stand which highlights the complete shift of Washington towards Zionist interests, should come as a strong reminder for all the Arab countries, some of whom have joined the so-called peace process in the hope to reach peace and justice, that the designs of international Zionism, extend to putting the whole of the region, including the people and their cultural as well as human heritage, under the tutelage of Tel Aviv.

It is high time to follow the glorious path of the Islamic resistance of Lebanon which by devotion and dedication, has sustained the freedom struggle and threatens to torpedo the 'peace process' supported and defended by the USA-Tel Aviv alliance.

**Iran: Commentary Views German Foreign Minister's Trip to U.S.**

*LD1505154196 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 12 May 96 p2*

[Unattributed commentary: "Europe Does Not Surrender to the United States"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Upon his arrival from an official visit to the United States, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said that Germany supports the EU's policy of critical dialogue with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Speaking to the Bundestag, Kinkel said that Germany will not follow the U.S. policy of isolating Iran.

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First of all, Europe has realised that the United States has waged a trade war on all potential rivals and it will resort to all possible means to outwit its rivals.

Secondly, it has been discerned well by European countries that the United States would spare no effort in pressuring other countries to follow its policies. What Europe should not forget is that Washington's leverage in this regard is limited.

The United States imposed an embargo on Iran with the main aim of isolating Iran. But, practically, it is the United States which has been isolated. This is why Washington clutches at every straw to involve countries in its anti-Iran plots.

Thirdly, the EU and almost all other countries have realised that Washington does not have even a single evidence to support its baseless charges against Iran. Washington imposed the embargo on Iran because it claimed that Tehran supports terrorism and tries to build nuclear weapons.

It is likely that Kinkel has asked U.S. officials to support the charges against Iran with evidence, and U.S. officials have failed. This may be why Kinkel has said that Germany and the EU will continue their dialogue with Iran, not following U.S. policies against Iran.

The unfolding events shows that the United States, especially Secretary of State Warren Christopher, has a strong animosity toward Iran. Since 1979, various U.S. administrations have resorted to the Iran card for parochial ends.

This time, the Iran card is being played for strengthening U.S. trade hegemony over Europe. European countries must not surrender to the United States. If they surrender in trade today, the United States will ask them to compromise on other vital issues tomorrow.

**Iran: Daily Praises Kohl's Rejection of National Guilt**

*LD1505155296 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 13 May 96 p 2*

[Commentary by H. Najafi: "Kohl's Germany"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is being universally acknowledged now that Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany is a strong-willed and a pragmatic European leader. He has proved it by accomplishing a very complicated mission: the reunification of his divided fatherland.

One should recall that there were many seemingly unsurmountable obstacles in Kohl's path. But he was determined to carry out this mission. And, of course, there were many in Europe and America who tried to discourage the German leader.

Kohl fully conscious of the strength and cunning of powers favoring a divided Europe, knew better that it was not easy to tread alone on the path towards unifying Europe. He saw the need and necessity to cultivate stronger friendship with his counterparts in France and other European capitals.

Francois Mitterrand was Kohl's friend and ally. Similarly he established cordial relations with Jacques Delors in Brussels. Presently the German Chancellor sees eye to eye with French President Jacques Chirac on many issues relevant to Europe and its credibility. Currently Chirac is a guest of the Bonn Chancellor.

Another positive aspect of Kohl's character is his ability to overcome feelings of guilt and shame for the so-called atrocities committed by the Nazis and which many believe are exaggerated.

It is not easy to recall how many films were and are being produced in Hollywood on the Nazi subject. Hundreds of books were authored on the crimes of Nazism.

During the past 50 years, the German nation was regularly slapped on its face by such movies and books. Several German historians and scholars who have spent long years studying the so-called holocaust and found the currently circulating stories extremely exaggerated and biased, are unable to convey the outcome of their endeavors to their own people.

Nevertheless, "Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust" is the latest book by an American.

Daniel Johan Goldhagen, author of the 619-page book, puts the blame on all Germans. He believes that the people of Germany, all of them, by virtue of their strong anti-semitism collaborated with Hitler and the Nazis in their attempts to exterminate the Jews.

It is worth noting that this time the German nation, because of Kohl's sound leadership refused to receive the umbrage.

"Guilt is always a personal matter," Bonn's Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said in his recent address to the American Jewish community in Washington. He flatly rejected the notion of collective guild laid out in the said book and maintained that the Germans are no longer willing to keep mum because of the burden of conscience they were made to carry over half a century. In clear terms he state that guilt is neither collective or hereditary.

Given Kinkel's stance on the recent anti-German campaign, and Bonn's demonstrated unwillingness to yield

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to pressure tactics from known quarters, it can be fairly said that the architect of German unification is proceeding with political independence and acumen. Bonn's statements are, after all, a manifestation of the nation's thinking and direction.

**Iran: SALAM Responds to Reader's Query on Aid to Lebanon**

*LD1505154396 Tehran SALAM in Persian 13 May 96 p 2*

[Unattributed article: "Hello SALAM" — from "Readers' Column"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified reader] The government donated $120 thousand dollars as aid to the people of Lebanon. At the same time we read in SALAM, that an old man was dying in a derelict building site, near Mo'in Boulevard, and no state organization or official was prepared to come and assist this hapless compatriot. We do not wish to question the essence of assisting the people of Lebanon, but it is said that charity begins at home. Why should we make donations abroad, while there are poor people inside the country? Which budget allocation did the gentlemen cut to finance the donation? Please could someone pay attention to the individuals who raise these questions?

[SALAM] It is possible that the people have donated this sum to the gentlemen with the objective of helping the people of Lebanon.

**Iran: Spokesman—AFP 'Distorted' Rafsanjani Remarks on Lebanon**

*LD1505193696 Tehran IRNA in English 1909 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 15, IRNA — Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmud Mohammadi said today that Agence France Press (AFP) has distorted the statement made by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani at the 4th ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] summit in Ashgabat on Tuesday [14 May]. The AFP correspondent from Ashgabat had quoted President Rafsanjani as saying that the government in Lebanon is 'illegitimate'. Mohammadi branded the AFP report as "pure fabrication" and "open distortion" of the remarks of the Iranian president at the meeting of heads of state of the 10-nation Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). He added that the Islamic Republic of Iran backs the government and people of Lebanon against the Zionist regime.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman quoted a paragraph in the address of President Rafsanjani to the effect that the recent crimes of the Zionist regime in Lebanon is indicative of the failure of that regime (Israel) in countering the struggles of the peoples of Palestine and Lebanon. He then added that amazingly the AFP correspondent distorted the clear stand of the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to Lebanon, and that too at a time when the foreign ministers of Iran and France had pursued common political efforts in Damascus to end the Zionist aggression against the people of Lebanon.

[Tehran IRNA in English at 1445 GMT on 15 May likewise carried the following Tehran-datelined report: "The Arabic service of the Agence France Presse (AFP) in a report from Ashgabat on Wednesday distorted President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's remarks misquoting him as saying in the Turkmen capital that the Lebanese government was illegal. The report is unfounded and fabricated, said an IRNA news analyst. The analyst, an expert on Central Asian developments, said the report by the AFP Arabic service is the result of the carelessness and misunderstanding of the agency.

"He said President Rafsanjani in his remarks at the summit meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Ashgabat, had condemned the aggressions of the Zionist regime on Lebanon and the U.S. support for the Zionists. The president had supported the Lebanese government in his address, the analyst said, adding that nowhere in his remarks had President Rafsanjani referred to the Lebanese government as being illegal."]

**Iran: Third Phase of Gulf Exercise 'Successfully Staged'**

*LD1505212296 Tehran IRNA in English 2050 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bushehr, May 15, IRNA — The third phase of a military maneuver by marine units of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) was successfully staged in the northern waters of the Persian Gulf on Tuesday [14 May], announced a high-ranking military source on Wednesday.

According to IRGC Marine Forces Commander at Iran's second naval zone, Hoseyn Kargar, during Tuesday's exercises, gunboats equipped with missile and rocket-launchers attacked hypothetical enemy positions pounding them with heavy artillery and medium and long range missiles. The IRGC marine maneuver started last Sunday in northern Persian Gulf in an area between Bushehr port and Khark Island.

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**Iran: Move To Impeach Interior Minister Withdrawn**

*LD1505153696 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 13 May 96 p 2*

[Unattributed article: "Impeachment Move Against Interior Minister Dropped"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, 12 May — Four Majles deputies who in a letter signed by several deputies, had called for impeachment of the interior minister, withdrew their decision here Sunday [12 May]. The impeachment move stands annulled.

A group of deputies had sought impeachment of four ministers. But with four deputies withdrawing their decision regarding the interior minister, the move against only this minister stands cancelled.

According to the Majles regulations, the impeachment move is valid when at least 12 deputies sign the letter otherwise it has no validity.

The impeachment move against the three other ministers is however still valid.

**Iran: Interior Minister Not To Be Impeached by Majles**

*LD1505163896 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 13 May 96 p1*

[Report by M. Serjo'i: "Majles Won't Impeach Besharati"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran: Two parliament deputies yesterday told IRAN NEWS that Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati won't be impeached by the Majles.

'Alireza Bahonar, people's representative from Tehran, said Parliament Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri discussed Besharati's impeachment with the 13 deputies who had requested it and six deputies withdrew their requests. At least 10 deputies must demand that an impeachment process be initiated against cabinet ministers.

Mohsen Yahyavi, also a deputy from Tehran, confirmed that the impeachment process against Besharati and Construction Jihad Minister Gholamreza Foruzesh, have indeed been halted after Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri held a meeting with the 13 deputies who wanted the two ministers questioned.

Thirteen Majles deputies had demanded that Besharati appear before the legislative body to answer questions regarding alleged improprieties at some polling booths during 19th April elections as well as other issues related to the Guardians Council. The Interior Ministry is responsible for the elections under the supervision and guidance of the Guardians Council. But since the Constitution has no provision for questioning the Council, all enquiries are directed at the interior minister. Another 15 deputies had demanded Foruzesh's impeachment because of several alleged unlawful acts of the Construction Jihad Minister.

Bahonar, who was on the Jame'eh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez (JRM) [Militant Clergy Association] list of candidates in the recent parliamentary elections, told Iran News that investigating the actions of the office of Tehran Municipality has also been called off because the current Majles will end before the final report is ready. However, Yahyavi contradicted Bahonar and said, "I imagine the investigation of the municipality's conduct will go ahead as scheduled during the term of the current (fourth Majles)."

Yahyavi who is a member of the Majles' Presiding Board and his candidacy for the fifth term of the parliament was supported by the JRM, said if explanations are needed from the municipality, the interior minister will provide them, not the Mayor (Gholam Hoseyn Karbaschi), and added that if any violations are found the case will be referred to the judiciary.

Yahyavi also said that impeachment processes against the ministers of interior and construction jihad were dropped because the Majles Speaker did not want any ministers censured in the final days of the legislative body. He added that despite the fact that it is the deputies' right to question and investigate the ministers, the impeachment process would have created the impression that the outgoing Majles was settling its accounts with the cabinet.

**Iran: Guardian Council Annuls Results in 2 Constituencies**

*LD1505171296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At today's Guardian Council meeting, the file for the electoral constituency of Tabriz was examined and the correctness of the election in that constituency was endorsed. Also at the meeting, the file for the second round of elections for the fifth term of the Majles for the constituencies of Varzaqan and Zanjan was examined and the correctness of the election was not endorsed. Consequently, the results for these two constituencies were annulled.

The file for the electoral constituency of Taft was also discussed and examined, and, after the results in two ballot boxes, numbering 34-'Abdollah [as heard] and 6 in the district of Bahman-Abarkuh, the correctness of the

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election in this constituency was endorsed. As a result, Mr. Seyyed Mohammad Taqi Mohassel-Hamadani was elected to the Majles [for this constituency]. [passage omitted]

**Iran: Besharati on 'National Campaign' Against Narcotics**

*LD1505185596 Tehran IRNA in English 1750 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 15, IRNA — Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati here Wednesday [15 May] described the campaign against the evil of narcotics as a "national campaign". Besharati, calling heroin a "dangerous poison", said the objective behind preparation and distribution of narcotics by global arrogance was to corrupt the youth. He said the media should help officials in charge of the anti-narcotics campaign inform people of the dangers of using drugs, especially heroin.

**Iran: Hezbollah Vows To Prevent Sorush Speech, Condemns Bad-Hejab**

*LD1305153096 Tehran SALAM in Persian 9 May 96 p 2*

[Unattributed Report: "Gathering of Ansar-e Hezbollah Against Improper Islamic Covering for Women, and Liberalism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday afternoon, the group known as the Ansar-e Hezbollah [supporters of Hezbollah] began marching from Vali-ye Asr Square and, chanting slogans against liberalism, condemned bi-hejabi and bad-hejabi [referring to women who either fail to wear the appropriate Islamic covering altogether or do so badly].

The group, which numbered about 100, gathered at the technical college of Amir Kabir University and, condemning the university's Islamic association regarding its invitation to Dr. ['Abdolkarim] Sorush to deliver a speech next Sunday [12 May], announced that they would prevent this speech with severity.

According to our correspondent, one of the people in the group said: The naive students who fall for these beautiful words [of Sorush] should join the Hezbollah [instead]. He went on to say: Deviant and hypocritical people are studying at this college and, if they persist in their conspiracies, they will be hanged in this same college as punishment. It should be added that the Ansar-e Hezbollah called on its members to gather at the college on Sunday [12 May] to perform congregational prayers.

In its rally yesterday, the group chanted the following slogans: "This nation will strike a heavy blow in the face of the enemies of the clergy", "We are followers of Zahra [Prophet's daughter], we do not want bad-hejab," "We are followers of the Koran, we do not want bad-hejab," "Pseudo-religious association, this is the beginning of the battle," "Hezbollah is awake, it despises liberals," "Pseudo- religious intellectual, mercenary pen-pusher," "We will never be down-trodden," and "Publications that are affiliated [to the West] must be closed."

**Iran: Naziabad Citizens Assail Press Account of Karbaschi Visit**

*LD1505220696 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 13 May 96 p 2*

[Article by the AKHBAR news network: "People of Naziabad: PAYAM-E DANESHJU is Creating an Adverse Climate"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A number of inhabitants of Tehran's Naziabad [district] have sent a petition to the offices of AKHBAR, criticizing PAYAM-E DANESHJU for publishing a report about clashes between a number of non-natives [of Naziabad] and the speakers at a meeting in which Dr. Malekzadeh and Gholam Hoseyn Karbaschi, the mayor of Tehran, spoke, and saying that none of the people who disrupted the meeting were from the area.

The letter, which was also signed by people who had attended the meeting, reads: By divulging the truth and exposing the false and baseless claim by PAYAM-E DANESHJU the intrigues and un-Islamic actions of a few people are prevented and the alert people of Tehran will learn the truth.

The petition adds: After a number of inhabitants of Naziabad and the south of the city [of Tehran] invited Dr. Malekzadeh and Gholam Hoseyn Karbaschi, the mayor of Tehran, to speak, a meeting was organized for 29 Farvardin [17 April] about the importance of the elections for the fifth Majles. After the mayor's speech, some people in the audience started shouting slogans and thanking Mr. Karbaschi, but about 15 people — who had come on a minibus from another district to make trouble — asked a few irrelevant questions and then started shouting slogans, such as death to liberals and enemies of the supreme jurisconsult [Khamene'i], and intended to create tension and conflict. After the incident, to keep the peace and not feed propaganda fodder to foreign radios, the speakers left the prayer house. Thus what was printed in that publication [PAYAM-E DANESHJU] about Mr. Karbaschi being asked ques-

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tions during his speech and clashes and fighting and his escape from the prayer house are pure lies.

Referring to the fact that the local people had ignored the actions of that group, the petition stresses: None of those people were inhabitants of Naziabad.

**Iran: Upcoming Sessions of Fifth Majles Viewed**

*LD1505203796 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 12 May 96 p 2*

[Article: "The Fifth Majles to Begin its Session on Second Week in Khordad"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Political Desk: The Islamic Consultative Majles will hold an open session today. [passage omitted]

This week, the Majles will hold three open sessions, and possibly — using its monthly holidays — the Fourth Majles will end its term [after that].

The Fifth Majles will begin its work in the second week of Khordad [28 May to 3 June], because 7 Khordad [27 May] is Tasu'a [the day before the martyrdom of Imam Husayn and a public holiday in Iran].

During the first session, the Majles doyen will be identified. The Majles speaker and the Majles presidium will be elected following a review of the [deputies'] credentials. The credentials will be reviewed at the relevant committee and then debated at an open session.

**Iran: Sorush Appeals to Rafsanjani Against Obstacles To Speaking**

*LD1505204896 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 12 May 96 p 2*

[News Desk Item: "Dr. Sorush's Letter to the President"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. 'Abdolkarim Sorush [Iranian religious thinker] has written a letter addressed to his excellency the president in which he has complained about the obstacles created in the way of his speeches and lectures. He says: It is around eight months that I have not accepted any invitation to make a speech or spoken at any gathering.

A part of the letter says: God be praised, I have never become enraged when such wounds have been inflicted on me and the smile has never departed from my lips despite having a broken heart. I have never become depressed when hearing the sarcasm of the jealous. I have never allowed discord to enter my mind. I have written about the narrow crossroads of prosperity and have left the nouveau riche and his donkey [as published, possible reference to recently acquired wealth] to himself. I have seen a rose garden through this fire kindling.

I ask you [the president], have things in this land come to the point that a teacher has to risk his life to attend a classroom, and does he have to prepare himself for martyrdom in order to do so?

**Iran: SALAM Responds to Comment on Effects of Poverty on Faith**

*LD1505184896 Tehran SALAM in Persian 13 May 96 p 3*

[From the readers' column entitled: "Hello SALAM"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Please could you remind the state authorities that the people's religious beliefs become weaker as they get poorer? If you solve the people's economic problems, you would not have to worry about their faith and religion. This is the same as the conversation, which took place years ago, when the noble Prophet's uncle told Abrahah [viceroy of Abyssinia]: "You do not have to confiscate my camels to finance the guardians of God's House. Give me back the camels and God will look after His House."

[SALAM] Of course, one cannot agree with this honorable reader. That is, the people's faith cannot be maintained solely by protecting their economic standards. The faith and the religious values should be maintained through proper planning. However, it is certain that resorting to irresponsible and ruthless methods would be harmful to society and the state.

**Iran: Daily Criticizes Bill Giving Lifetime Benefits to Officials**

*LD1405130996 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 8 May 96 p 14*

[Article by Majid Razazi: "Regarding the Bill To Grant Benefits for Life to Office-holders in the Islamic Republic's System"; subtitled "An Unfitting Attitude"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although the deputies in the fourth term of the Majles are serving their final days, they have intensified their legislative activities, approving some useful and necessary bills. However, one of the bills proposed by the deputies in recent sessions — the single urgency of which was approved in the last few days — is a bill that must be studied carefully.

It is stated in the bill that "In order to safeguard the dignity of the officials of the sacred system of the Islamic Republic," senior officials, as well as Majles deputies should, after their term of service has ended, continue to enjoy all their previous benefits and, in the

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event they commit an offense, should be dealt with in a different way from the general public.

Since the Majles deputies approved the single urgency of this bill, it seems necessary to make certain points about it.

The thing that differentiates the nature of the Islamic Republic from the previous system and which is, in fact, considered to be one of the sacred values and achievements gained at the cost of the blood shed by the martyrs of the Islamic revolution, is the popular nature of the system and its officials. In this context, the officials of the system, regardless of their rank, consider themselves to be at one with the ordinary people in the streets and, in accordance with the repeated recommendations of the late Imam [Khomeyni], may God be satisfied with his deeds, and the eminent leader [Khamene'i], they adjust their lives in line with the lives of the masses.

Thus, the true officials of the system of the Islamic Republic, even while holding senior posts which allow considerable material and nonmaterial benefits, prefer, as much as possible, not to take advantage of these benefits so that their likeness to the masses will be stronger, thereby strengthening the foundations of the system of the Islamic Republic.

Thus, the request by a number of Majles deputies that they should continue to enjoy all the material and occupational benefits of their office even after their term of service has ended is a kind of materialistic and unfitting attitude toward holding office in the Islamic Republic system.

Nor is this bill free from a threat of separating officials from the people. It seems that, on the whole, the proposed bill and the approval of its single urgency are not in keeping with the fundamental values of the revolution.

**Iran: KEYHAN Discusses Price Increases**

*LD1305204396 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 9 May 96 p14*

[Article by Majid Razazi entitled: "The Argument for Justifying Foodstuffs' and Detergents' Price Rises Does Not Appear Convincing"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The daily 'RESALAT' has carried an interview with the Industries Ministry director general for the food and pharmaceutical industries, which can be summarized as follows:

1. The retail price of soap has been raised because the hard currency allocation for the industry was switched from the floating rate (1,750 rials per U.S. dollar) to the export rate (3,000 rials per dollar). The reason for the switch is the difficulty we are experiencing in trying to obtain the raw material requirements of the industry at the floating rate of hard currency.

(Of course, as far as we remember, last year there was no difficulty in supplying soap to the market)

2. The reason for raising the price of washing up liquid is the higher fuel and labor costs.

3. The reason for raising the prices of cakes, biscuits, pastry, macaroni, and other confectionary products is the higher price of flour.

(Of course it is not said why the price of flour was raised)

4. This year we are exporting some of the detergents produced in the country. The Industries Ministry has forecast that we can export up to 50,000 tonnes of our surplus product this year.

(The forecast may not be accurate. If export figures are guaranteed, lower production may lead to a shortage in the domestic market. Higher prices and shortage may threaten public hygiene) [passage omitted]

**Iran: IRIB Official Quoted on Expansion Plans**

*LD1305190996 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 11 May 96 p 3*

[Unattributed report: "Deputy Director on Subscriber Television Networks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following a report published in the 870th edition of HAMSHAHRI on 30 December 1995, the public relations office of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting [IRIB] has sent the following explanation to the paper:

Your report in the 870th edition of the paper, quoting Mehdi Tabeshian and the Administrative Council of Hormozgan Province, about a plan to open four subscriber television transmitters is not correct and is, hereby, denied.

IRIB's deputy director, in reply to a question on the plans to combat cultural onslaught, pointed out that the creation of four nationwide television networks, as well as a fifth provincial channel for broadcasting local programs was planned. He said: At the present feasibility studies are being undertaken to ascertain the economic viability of organizing several television networks for particular subscribers. Such subscribers will watch their favorite program by obtaining decoders.

He went on: One of the objectives of the IRIB is to produce television serials on the history of Islam.

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Despite the budgetary constraints, the IRIB has managed to produce some programs on this subject.

**Iran: Budget Said Rushed Through**

*96LA0194B Tehran SALAM in Persian 10 Mar 96 p 8*

[FBIS Translated Text] [Boxed item] **Note: The speedy ratification of the 1375 [21 March 1996-20 March 1997] Budget in the Majles, contrary to the process of previous years, somewhat astonished everyone. Even though the political climate of the county is affected by the elections, the action of the Majles must not be regarded as unexpected. Apparently the content of the budget as well has been affected by the elections. The following analysis, quoted from ASR-E MA No. 34, takes a look at this issue, which we hope will be of use to those interested.**

**1. A Tunnel to the Past**

With the end of the imposed war, a new perspective was opened to the Iranian economy. It was expected that by re-channeling the expenditures previously for the war and mobilization of manpower involved in the war for construction and by setting the wheels of production in motion, in addition to making up for having fallen behind due to the imposed war, the possibility for just welfare benefits would be created for all the citizens. The devising of the First Developmental Plan became possible with the reflection of such a perspective, and the motto of "construction" became the first line in the first year of the second decade of the revolution. The initial steps of construction were taken relying on the First Plan, but in continuing, the implementation of the "modification policy" took precedence over the "First Developmental Plan" and the "freeing of foreign trade," "privatization," "deregulation of prices," "creating a single foreign currency rate," etc., neutralized those steps. The government employed all its energy to implement these policies, and finally, by creating a single foreign currency rate in the 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994] Budget (the last year of the plan) and achieving a zero budget deficit, which was called the "turning point" by the executive officials, it engaged in the implementation of the single foreign currency policy in 1372. The examination of the implemental operations of the government during the 1368-1372 [21 March 1989-20 March 1994] period—which was accompanied by the cooperation of the Fourth Majles—and the enumeration of its strong and weak points are not the objectives of this article, but since whatever is occurring on the economic scene of the country today is the result and consequence of such an operation, we are obliged to review some of its general points.

The greatest economic gain of the government operation in the 1368-1372 period can be considered to be the achievement of the annual growth of 7.3 percent in gross domestic product. Undoubtedly, this is a position gain. The question is, however, at what cost has this been achieved? At the cost of creating at least $30 billion in foreign debt, which at one juncture inflicted the most severe blow on the credibility and dignity of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the world, the effects and consequences of which still continue; increased inflation in the last years of the plan, which placed a great deal of pressure on the vulnerable strata; the escalation of unfair distribution of income in the society and the escalation of the class system such that about 48 percent of the income of the society was placed at the disposal of 20 percent of the people and 37 percent of it at the disposal of 10 percent, etc.? This all occurred under circumstances in which the government, in the course of the five years of the First Plan, had about $74 billion in oil revenues, and the country had $85 billion in foreign currency revenues.

The point that must be made is that, in response to the question, "What price must be paid for implementing this policy?" the implementors of the modification policy frequently said to "make investments in the country" and strengthen the production foundation, for which we are forced to pay a heavy price. They based their strongest reasoning for their attention to investment on the growth of production in the years of the implementation of the plan. Even though this reason was clearly insufficient to prove such claims at that time for the economic experts and those familiar with the issues, the published economic statistics indicate that the percentage of fixed gross domestic capital formation from the national production in the best situation in 1372 reached 16.3 percent of the gross national product. This is while economists regard the share of investments in the gross national product for developing countries to be at least 30 percent or more. Relying on the published statistics, it is clear that the economic operation of the 1368-1372 period, despite the many slogans, has not taken significant steps in investment, and the reason for the growth in production in these years must be sought in the use of the empty capacities of the production agencies and the abundant injection of foreign currency into the national economy at the cost of putting the country in debt and making it lose credibility.[1]

The continuation of the inflationary trend of the economy in 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995] and 1374 [21 March 1995-20 March 1996] is another reason that the country is in a tight spot between "investment" and "inflation." This is while the trend of the decrease in oil foreign currency revenues has doubled the pressure

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on the national economy. Unfortunately, it must be said that the roots of these problems are to be found in the implementation of the modification policy. For example, the implementation of the immature policy of a single foreign currency rate in 1372 helped expose the psychological illnesses of the national economy to the fullest extent.

The decrease in the price of oil in the second half of 1372 and the appearance of the debt crisis caused the severe increase in the price of foreign currency in the final month of that year, up to the level of 3,000 rials [R], so that the government was forced to give up the implementation of the creation of a single foreign currency rate, and, by setting R1,750 on the dollar in the 1373 budget and restricting the sale of foreign currency in that year, in practice, it yielded to the foreign currency multi-rate system. Rather, the open and hidden budget deficit of the country, especially the deficits resulting from the difference in the rate of foreign currency to repay foreign obligations, precisely one year after the turning point, caused the growth of cash flow in the society and the rate of inflation in the first half of 1373 began to climb so that in Mehr 1373 [23 September-22 October 1994], the government also abandoned the policy of deregulation of prices, was forced to implement the "policy of pricing goods and services," and revived the "law of punishments." But the rate of inflation that moved in step with the actual parameters of the economy did not succumb to these measures and at the end of 1373, reached 35.2 percent compared to the previous year.

The price of foreign currency, too, continued to climb in step with the rate of inflation, and the cash flow and the inflationary expectations of the society, too, added to the swelling and pressure of the prices. In the first two months of this year, the rate of inflation increased tremendously, with the price of the dollar reaching up to R7,000. In reaction to these conditions, the government, by making "new foreign currency decisions," returned to the policy of stabilizing the rate of foreign currency and, through another deviation from the theory of "modification," tried to harness the inflation, control the rate of foreign currency, and prevent the economic crisis in the country. Even though the policy of stabilization of the foreign currency rate helped create psychological calm in the society and control the rate of foreign currency, in the area of controlling inflation, as was expected, it did not succeed, and the increasing trend of the rate of inflation continued such that the Central Bank announced it to be 57.2 percent in the first eight months of this year, compared to a similar period last year. It can be said that from the beginning of this year until Dey [22 December-20 January], this rate has had a growth of about 50 percent, a rate which is unprecedented in the history of the Iranian economy since the rate has been calculated.

**2. Second Developmental Plan**

With the completion of the implementation of the First Developmental Plan and in fact the policy of modification in 1372, the government in the second half of 1372 offered the Second Developmental Plan to the Majles and asked for its ratification. The Majles, in fact, the majority faction, because it did not have the necessary opportunity to deeply study and gain experience from the implementation of the First Plan, postponed the ratification of the Second Plan bill for a year, but the truth was something else. The decrease in the price of oil in the second half of 1372 along with the debt crisis caused severe turmoil in the national economy in the last months of that year. The flood of criticism, even by the newspapers that support the government, poured in aimed at the executive officials, and the pre-agenda speeches of the deputies criticizing high prices, inflation, etc., charged the scene of the Majles. Naturally, in such a climate, the ratification of the Second Plan by the political faction that had taken charge of the majority in the Fourth Majles with the motto of "support for Hashemi" was very difficult and had unpleasant political, social, and election side effects. In such a climate, the majority faction, with appropriate tactics—that is, the policy of waiting and expectation with the rationale of having the necessary time to deeply study the bill—postponed the discussion and ratification of the Second Plan to an appropriate opportunity. Finally, in the second half of 1373, when the economic situation calmed down somewhat as a result of the increase in the price of oil and foreign currency conservation, the bill on the Second Developmental Plan, which had completely been changed in the Combined Committee, with the slogans of economic growth alongside social justice and "modification of the modification policy" of the majority faction, came to the Majles and was ratified.

The Mojahedin Organization of the Islamic Revolution of Iran in Issue No. 4 of ASR-E MA (09/09/1373 [3 November 1994]) expressed its views regarding the ratification of this law and pointed out: "Since the Second Developmental Plan is founded on the basis of modification and the capitalist economic axis, despite the efforts of some of the honorable deputies of the Majles, with the implementation of what has been ratified, the protection and strengthening of the economic independence and expansion of social justice will face serious problems, this is while growth and development also will be slower compared to the First

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Plan." From the perspective of the organization, because of the spirit and policy that govern the Second Plan, that is, the continuation of the implementation of the economic modification policy, despite the motto of the "modification of the modification policy," the majority faction can never find a suitable solution for the national economy with this plan. It can even be said that the ratified Second Plan of the Majles, compared to the Second Plan bill that was offered by the government to the Majles, has more capitalist tendencies and more weaknesses.

Despite what was mentioned, the Second Plan can be a basis for the evaluation of the annual budgets and their compatibility with the Plan.[2]

It should be mentioned that the Second Plan that was mentioned as an evaluation index for the operation of the Fourth Majles, and the intellectual leaders of the "traditional right" announced in every street that its ratification was their greatest privilege, in the first step, that is, in the first year of the implementation of the plan, important parts of it were ignored and the considerations of time were such that no voice of protest rose from its supporters as well. Enumerating the instances of deviation from the implementation of the Second Plan in the first year is not the objective of this essay, but in order to prove this claim, we refer to one clear example:

Section One of the general policies of the Second Developmental Plan concerning foreign trade states:

1.1. The foreign currency system of the country will be managed in the form of a floating system, in which attention will be paid to the following:

A. a single foreign currency rate;
B. the ability to convert the currency of the country to foreign currencies, based on the floating rate.

What was implemented in the area of a foreign currency policy in 1374, and especially the "policy of stabilization of the foreign currency rate," is not at all compatible with what has been stated in the plan. "The foreign currency system in the form of a managed floating system" is more like historical fiction than a policy, because neither has the "creation of a single currency" been achieved, nor has the "ability to convert the currency of the country to foreign currencies on the basis of the floating rate" become possible, and the economic realities are such that even "the conversion of the currency of the country to foreign currencies at the floating rate" is considered contraband in the open market and has resulted in punishment. It should not be forgotten that any sort of policy regarding the foreign currency system affects the whole national economy, because with the characteristics of the Iranian economy, foreign currency has a key and significant role, and it is clear that when in the first year of the Second Plan they deviate from the implementation of the ratified foreign currency policy, automatically many other policies cited in this plan will also be cast to the wind. In fact, what will occur on the scene of the economy in practice will not have any relationship to what is cited in the plan. As a result, the 12.4 percent projected inflation rate in the plan for 1374 reaches to more than 50 percent in practice, etc. Of course, this does not mean that if all were in accordance with the plan, the economic problems of the country would have been less than they are.

### 3. The Second Developmental Plan and Next Year's Budget Bill

The Second Developmental Plan is the masterpiece of the majority faction in the Fourth Majles, and it must be used as a basis for the evaluation of the belief of this faction in its content. The 1375 budget, "compatible with the content of the Second Plan," shows well that in numerous instances, what the majority faction has itself ratified it has forgotten, and it has ratified according to a "practical" and "rubber stamp pragmatism" and under the influence of the five Majles elections. In continuation, we shall list some of the contradictions in the content of the budget and the Second Plan.

In the Plan law, the general budget for 1375 has been projected at R41,296 billion. The ratified general budget for next year is R61,033 billion. It can be seen that the ratified figure is R19,737 billion more than the projected figure. Even though the director of the Plan and Budget Organization has regarded this discrepancy to be due to some incorrect calculations of foreign currency and the increase in subsidies, no matter what reason is given for this difference, it will not cover its incongruity. Supposing that it is accepted, it will itself be a reason for the weakness of the projections of the Second Plan in conforming to the economic realities of the country.

The point that must be made in connection with the above-mentioned discrepancy is that, in the Second Plan, for the government expenditures of the general budget during the years of the implementation of the plan (1374-1379 [21 March 1995-20 March 2001]), an average growth of 5.1 percent is taken into consideration with the supposition that the average annual growth would be 5.1 percent; the growth of cash flow, 12.5 percent; and the average annual rate of inflation, 12.4 percent. Besides the fact that none of these suppositions stated in the plan materialized, in the first year of implementation, the difference between the figure of the next year's budget and the plan has added to the spuriousness of these suppositions. Some economic experts, by emphasizing this difference, believed that

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next year's budget, by escalating the increase in the growth of cash flow, is extremely inflationary, and an inflation rate in excess of this year's must be expected. In fact, the majority faction, by deviating from their own plan, has accepted the causes of inflation for next year, and this is while the main motto of this faction in the ratification of the Second Plan was "economic growth along with social justice," which they regularly repeat nowadays in the election climate. It is obvious what relationship the "increase in the rate of inflation" has with "social justice," and if there is anyone who has not understood it, he can review the existing economic situation of the country, which is the result of the inflationary trend of the recent years, in order to understand that under the shadow of the frightening monster of inflation, the poor have become poorer and the rich richer.

Note 17 of the Second Plan law states: "The government is responsible to include subsidies for essential goods by retaining the coupons and the amount of 1372 foreign currency in the course of the plan in foreign currency and rial form in the annual budget." In the fourth issue of ASR-E MA, under the heading of "A Look at the Second Developmental Plan Law of the Country," while calling this note a positive one, the organization considered the allocated foreign currency for essential goods on the basis of 1372 ($1,250 million) insufficient and disregarding the population growth and the world prices and declared it to be contrary to social justice. Apparently, the majority faction, too, under the influence of the economic realities, or election considerations, by deviating from the content of this note of the Plan law, engaged in ratifying the figure of $1,462 million to provide essential goods in 1375, which shows a difference of $212 million, and in Note 5 they have emphasized the equality of the number of essential goods coupons in 1375, at the number of 1372, in normal and cooperative forms, whereas Note 17 of the Plan law only mentions "retaining coupons."

In this connection, we should refer to the ratification of $388 million in allocated foreign currency to the imports of domestically produced raw materials for drugs and powdered milk and the import of some of the needed drugs into the country. This figure, too, contradicts the content of Note 16, Paragraph A, of the Plan law, in which providing drugs and powdered milk subsidies on the basis of foreign currency funds ratified in 1372, while a clear deviation from Paragraphs B and C of this note to the plan, also resulted in no price increase to be included for petroleum products, electricity, and natural gas in the budget law and in practice the content of Note 19 of the Plan law to be delayed until a favorable opportunity.

The section on the general policies of the Second Plan law, concerning the personnel policies of the government sector, mentions, "maintaining the level of salaries and wages of the administrative personnel at various administrative levels appropriate to the conditions of the country and the quality of the offering of services." Without wanting to engage in the discussion that government employees in recent years have severely lost their purchasing power due to inflation, the next year's ratified budget law also will not be able to "maintain the salary and wages of the administrative personnel at various administrative levels appropriate to the economic conditions of the country." If all the arrangements that include nearly 20 percent of the general government budget are achieved, it will have a salary increase of 20 to 30 percent for government employees. This is while the figure for inflation this year will be at least 50 percent. Such a situation means the continuation of the declining trend of the purchasing power of government employees.

**Conclusion**

Next year's budget, which was rapidly examined and ratified under the influence of the election conditions in the country, will be distanced from the Second Plan in its second year of implementation. Even though the general figure of the 1375 budget is inflationary, its details lean towards "social justice" under the influence of the election conditions. The increase in the figure of subsidies on essential goods and medicine; avoidance of an increase in the price of petroleum products, electricity, telephone, etc.; and measures to make up for the decrease in the purchasing power of government employees are signs of this tendency, but it must not be forgotten that if the Second Developmental Plan must be the basis for the evaluation of the economic operations of the country, this direction does not conform to its content, because the above-mentioned plan, despite the motto of "modification of the modification policy" of the majority faction, continues to be loyal to the modification policy. We believe that, despite the continual distancing of the budgets from the content of the plan this year and next, the economic problems of the country will not be solved, and the spirit that governs the Second Developmental Plan—that is, the modification policy—will prevent the implementation of just policies and even the development of the country in its true sense.

**Notes**

1. Regarding the evaluation of the operations of the First Plan concerning investments, see articles in ASR-E MA, Nos. 6, 7, 11, 13, and 15, in this connection.

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2. The viewpoint of the organization in connection with the 1374 and 1375 budgets are stated in ASR-E MA Nos. 8 and 30.

**Iran: Health Care Costs Said Deceptive**

*96LA0194A Tehran SALAM in Persian 9 Mar 96 p 9*

[Article by Dr. Seyyed Mehdi Modarreszadeh]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Mordad 1373 [23 July-22 August 1994], the Plan and Budget Organization presented to the president a detailed report regarding the serious waste of financial resources in building additional hospitals, which stunned many of the compatriots. According to this investigative report, carefully prepared on the basis of statistics and figures, it became clear that more 34,500 additional hospital beds exist in the country, the daily value of which amounts to about 520 billion tumans, and this is capital that is left stagnant and unused. In this report, the coefficient of the occupation of hospital beds in several cities was also stated to be at most 34 percent. Considering that the standard figure in this connection is 80 percent, that is, in every medical center, at least 80 percent of the beds must be occupied in order to make proper use of the beds and other hospital resources, the low occupancy coefficient of beds shows the stagnation and inactivity of hospitals, particularly the government hospitals.

Physicians and those involved in medicine know that even this low occupancy coefficient in our government hospitals is false and exceeds the actual numbers, because patients usually stay in the hospitals more than is necessary, and hospitals, in order to retain the statistics and be accountable to the officials, are inclined to hospitalize and keep the patients more than is necessary. Hence, the actual occupancy coefficient is less than this amount.

Many people thought and still think that the shortage of hospital beds and resources is the cause of the crowding of patients in front of the government hospitals and the problems related to hospitalization and treatment in such hospitals. The reason for this misunderstanding is to some extent the officials of these hospitals, who sometimes in response to the crowds of clients who want to be hospitalized and treated say that the beds are full or there is a shortage of resources, whereas this is not the main problem. In the newspapers, too, there are regularly various and sometimes shocking reports about the shortcomings of the treatment system and their tragic consequences. They often present reasons, such as a shortage of resources, "lack of proper hospital management," or, for instance, the indifference and irresponsibility of physicians or other health cadre.

Indeed, what is the problem? There are more than enough hospital beds. There are also more or less appropriate resources and equipment available; experienced physicians also exist; and every day significant reports on their brilliant successes in the use of new techniques, complex surgical and non-surgical procedures, and their extraordinary skills are published and broadcast in the press, radio and television. Then, what is the reason that patients are unhappy that they are not admitted to the hospitals, about the lengthy wait for operations and the inappropriate treatment of hospitalized patients?

The problem is that the existence of beds and various kinds of equipment in the treatment centers would not automatically result in the treatment of the patient. The use of the treatment system in a proper and efficient manner requires expenditures that must also be provided properly and appropriately. Otherwise, it is useless to expect proper treatment. Treating the patient is done by the treatment cadre, which includes physicians, nurses, health specialists, etc. Treatment of a patient requires education and acquisition of complex skills, and also accepting the heavy responsibility of treatment and the problematic side effects of certain treatments. If the services of the treatment cadre are not compensated appropriately, their inclination to accept this responsibility will automatically decrease. It is also true that the main goal of the physician must be to help the patient in the treatment of his illnesses and that economic issues are of secondary importance. This is the opinion of most physicians, but it must be noted that the spirit of humanitarianism and self-sacrifice by physicians can never fill the void resulting from the proper management of the health system. The problem is that the rates for treatment services have not increased by any means in proportion to the inflation in government and university hospitals, which are the largest hospitals in the country and where the downtrodden go, and are astonishingly low. Besides, a small portion of it is paid to the physician. As a small example, to perform an acute appendectomy, which must be done on an emergency basis and has many potential dangers, about 2,000 tumans is paid to the physician (a university professor) after months of delay. An anesthesiologist, who is summoned to the hospital in the middle of the night to administer anesthesia to a patient who needs a cesarean operation receives about 1,800 tumans after several months. Obviously, such a doctor has no personal car, is obliged to use a taxi, and must pay all of or more than this amount in cash for the taxi fare. In other instances, too, the situation is the same. Besides, this is in centers where the service fee plan is implemented. In centers where this plan is not implemented, physicians and surgeons must perform treatment and surgery for their fixed salaries of about

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20,000 to 50,000 tumans per month (depending on their years of service).

Can it be expected that in such a situation and despite the rapid inflation today, work will be done rapidly and in an orderly fashion? In any case, the physicians and other treatment cadre have to make a living, and because this is not possible in the government treatment centers, they are forced to open private offices or essentially engage in non-medical occupations. The latter case has had bad and tragic effects and has removed the useful stratum of the society from their constructive role and added to the nonproductive and middleman occupations. The problem is that those in charge and the health and treatment officials have not wanted in various times after the revolution to defend the rates, frankly, sincerely, and courageously, and have adjusted them not according to the existing rate of inflation but to the deficit.

It might be said that in many other professions, the salaries, benefits, and fees are not coordinated and are low and that this is not only with regard to the issue of treatment. The answer is that, firstly, many professions are not as sensitive as medicine, and the results of disorder in them are not so tragic. Seriously, slow work and disorder exist in many professions, but the affects are more clear and significant in certain professions, such as medicine. The main goal of this writer is not to defend the physicians. Rather, it is only to offer an analytical discussion to clarify the reasons for the disorder in government medicine.

Even though in the private sector the above-mentioned deficiencies and shortcomings are fewer, firstly, large strata of the people do not have the ability to pay the costs of the private sector, and in addition, the lack of treatment fees that can be implemented has caused absolute disorder in the private sector and medical fees to be twice, three times, up to 10 times different. If reasonable and justifiable fees are offered, the related organizations, such as the Medical Board and the Ministry of Health and Treatment, could question those who pay no attention to it and commit violations. But at the present time, even those in charge who are working in the private sector are unable to observe and do not observe the present fees and hence cannot force others to do so.

If the general insurance plan, about which a great deal of publicity has been made since last summer, does not have an appropriate basis for the payment of treatment costs and also is not coordinated with inflation, it will not accomplish anything more than the existing fee of the health services. As was expected, this plan was not received by the public and the reason must be sought in the people's lack of confidence in the promises of the officials and also the history of the inefficiency of health services and similar insurance. In any case, with the lack of receptiveness and widespread participation of the people, the necessary budget for the expenditures of general insurance will not be provided. Providing for the expenditures of the general insurance from the general government budget will also impose a heavy burden on the budget. In turn, the increase in the faulty cycle of the budget deficit, printing money, inflation, and more budget deficit have in recent years seriously decreased the value of the rial.

At the present, it seems that the issue of treatment also, like many other problems, requires the reform of the political structure and attracting the alert and voluntary participation of the people.

On the other hand, charitable organizations and persons who want to engage in charitable acts and good deeds through medicine must also have the above points in mind and know that building hospitals and treatment centers will not solve any problem and will not be the source of any effective service because no shortages exist in this regard. A public treatment center or a small hospital that naturally cannot have much equipment compared to an existing equipped university hospital cannot be the source of any positive effect. For those who truly want to please God, the best way to implement their purpose is to support the indigent patients who cannot afford to pay the treatment costs for themselves and their families and pay for their treatment in the existing medical establishments.

Once again, it should be remembered that the shortage is not in buildings, beds, and resources, but it is because treatment has costs and the deprived strata are unable to pay this cost. Some of this cost can be paid by charitable persons and institutions, and this is what the Emergency Committee has been doing for years within its capability. It has been and is a source of much service. Charitable individuals and institutions can directly assume the expenses of a number of downtrodden families or place their assistance at the disposal of the government and university hospitals, so that under their own supervision it can be spent on the treatment of people who go to those hospitals who cannot afford the expenditures. We hope God will grant us all success for sincere service.

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## Nepal & Bhutan

### Nepal: Norwegian Official Discusses Aid With Finance Minister

*BK1505141496 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 15 May 96*

[Report by a "POST reporter" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, May 14 — The visiting Norwegian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs has said that Norway has a proposal to include Nepal among three Asian countries in the priority countries' list. He also hoped that the proposal will be passed by the soon approaching parliament session.

Finance Minister [FM] Ram Sharan Mahat, in his meeting Sunday with Deputy Minister Asbjorn Mathisen [name as published] requested Norway to help solve Kathmandu's drinking water problem. As the government is going to implement Melamchi project to solve the acute water shortage, FM asked the minister to extend help for the same.

According to a Finance Ministry press release, responding to Mahat's requests, Mathisen said that his government will be providing assistance through and at a government and non- governmental level in the field of hydro electricity, health, education, women development, environment etc. Mathisen, however, said that they will give consideration to the Melamchi project. On the occasion, FM lauded Norway's assistance in the past. He also said that the Khimti Hydro Project, the first private sector venture between two countries, is a new dimension in economic cooperation between these two friendly countries.

## Pakistan

### Pakistan: Foreign Minister Offers Resignation Over Drug Scandal

*BK1505130996 Islamabad AL-AKHBAR in Urdu 14 May 96 pp 1, 7*

[Report by Shakil Chishti]

[FBIS Translated Text] ISLAMABAD: It has been learned through very reliable sources that the matter of Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali's resignation is still pending between Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and the foreign minister. Speaking to newsmen upon her return from Sweden, the prime minister said that the foreign minister had tendered his resignation after a conspiracy to implicate him in a hashish smuggling case, but she had turned it down.

Responsible circles say, however, that it was decided after consultations between the prime minister and Hamid Nasir Chattha, president of the Muslim League (Junejo Group), that Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali should be given charge of an office other than the Foreign Ministry because the European media is very critical of Pakistan for its involvement in narcotics smuggling. Pakistan would have to face serious problems in international forums due to the alleged involvement of the foreign minister in a hashish smuggling scandal. A final decision in this regard, however, is likely within the next few days.

### Pakistan: Foreign Minister Files Criminal Complaint Over Drug Scandal

*BK1505132196 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 14 May 96 p 12*

[APP report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LAHORE: Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has filed a criminal complaint against PML-N [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz] leaders Pir Binyameen and Khawaja Asif, MNA [Member of National Assembly], for falsely implicating him in drugs smuggling and thus damaging his reputation.

The complaint was filed through Barrister Saleem Sehgal in the court of judicial magistrate, Maqsud Ahmad here Monday. The magistrate has summoned the complainant, Sardar Asif, in the court on May 23 to record his statement in this regard. The complainant also filed some documents in the court in support of his case.

Sardar Asif submitted that he himself had requested the interior minister to order an inquiry into the allegation by any government agency and had also offered himself and his family members for the same. He also submitted that FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] had succeeded in arresting most of the culprits involved in the relevant drug smuggling case within 48 hours. The culprits, booked by FIA, were identified as Naseer Ahmad Mumtaz and Ali Ahmad, he contended. He submitted that preliminary investigation conducted by the federal agency had revealed that a gang of notorious smugglers had worked out a plan to transport the consignment and his brother Sardar Haroon Ahmad Ali or the owners of the mills was not at all involved in it.

The complainant submitted that neither he nor any of his family members is a director or shareholder of the Indus Valley Rice Mills, nor have they any connection with the same. In support of this claim, he also produced some documents in the court. He submitted that the accused (Pir Binyameen and Khawaja Asif) through the press hurled false and baseless allegations on him without producing any proof or document of his involvement or his family member in the particular drug smuggling case.

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The complainant further submitted that neither his uncle (late), Sardar Mohammad Hussain nor his late father ever received any financial benefit from any government. The complainant himself has never been named in any list of public leaders who took plots or any other benefit from the government. He submitted that there has never been any charge by any financial institution of loan write off or default against him or any member of his family.

Sardar Asif submitted that accusation hurled at him has done grievous injury to his reputation and his family and, what is more serious, to Pakistan all over the world because a foreign minister is face of his country. The complainant prayed the court that the accused be summoned, prosecuted and punished under section 500 read with Section 499 PPC.

**Pakistan: President, Afghanistan's Rabbani To Meet**

*BK1505123496 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 May 96 pp 1, 8*

[Report by Aroosa Alam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, May 14 — President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari will hold an important one-to-one meeting with President Borhanoddin Rabbani in Ashgabat during his two-day stay there.

According to well informed sources, President Farooq Leghari will discuss matters relating to the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan, the peace prospects and establishment of a broad-based interim government in Afghanistan.

Authorities in Islamabad are attaching great significance to the meeting which will be the first high-level contact between the two neighbouring countries in the last 12 months. It is believed that besides discussing Pakistan's proposals for the reconstruction of trade routes, President Leghari will also avail the opportunity to exchange views on restoring peace in Afghanistan.

In the backdrop of Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami joining the Kabul forces President Leghari's meeting with President Rabbani, according to informed sources, will be a step further towards the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan.

While the first available official comment from governmental sources was that the joining of Hekmatyar was an internal matter of Afghanistan, those who were monitoring the regional situation were of the views that Pakistan's greatest friend had crossed-over into Rabbani's camp and he would be able to remove the prevailing misunderstandings between Islamabad and Kabul.

The rejoining of Hezb-e Eslami with Rabbani forces would somewhat neutralize the influence and authority of Commander Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, who had remained hostile towards Islamabad. In fact, it were his men who reportedly attacked the Pakistan mission in Kabul.

About 12,000 troops of the opposition Hezb-e Eslami group entered Kabul yesterday. Though the details of the accord between the Kabul Government and Hezb-e Eslami were not yet known, Kabul authorities had claimed that the implementation of the accord had already begun.

In Islamabad, observers are keenly watching the development. Hekmatyar's men re-entry into Kabul would pave way to the rehabilitation of the Pakhtoon influence in the Afghan capital, being ruled for a long time by Tajik minority. What will be more important would be the what position was accorded to Golboddin Hekmatyar in the Kabul administration, and how many of his troops would be inducted into Kabul's government's forces. Apparently, Hekmatyar and Rabbani have joined hands to knock down the Taleban who had been knocking at the doors of Kabul now for almost 10 months.

"The alliance has come about on give and take basis and Pakistan had prior information about the negotiations being carried out by them", commented one competent source. According to these sources the development will also facilitate intra-Afghan conference which has been proposed by Iran.

Observers in Islamabad are also of the opinion that Hekmatyar's entry into Kabul will also effectively check the Indian interference in the Afghan capital and will help promote better understanding between Islamabad and Kabul. Analysts in Islamabad also envisage a similar accord between General Dostam and the Kabul administration as part of an effort to establish a broad-based interim government.

According to diplomatic sources, Iran has played a major role to broker this deal. It is believed that Tehran facilitated meetings between the representatives of two sides before the top leaders from the sides met to sign the accord.

Confusion, however prevailed in diplomatic circles on Tuesday [14 May] and there were conflicting reports about the actual nature of the reported alliance. Pakistan Foreign Affairs specialists were reportedly analyzing the situation. However, it is widely assumed that the Hezb will be given the portfolios of Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Finance in the newly broad-based administration in Kabul.

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"If this be so it will be great success for Pakistan as we will have our man at the top slot in Kabul", said an observer.

Mohammad Ali Imran From Peshawar adds: Talks between the Kabul regime and the Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan (HEA-Hekmatyar) have entered the final stage as the two sides have almost resolved the main irritants and misunderstandings involved in the process. This however didn't mean formation of new alliance in Kabul as any final approval from leadership of the two sides was still awaited.

This was stated by in charge of the political cell of Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan in Peshawar, Gulzai in an interview with THE MUSLIM Tuesday evening. The Hezb leader denied the reports regarding coalition between the Hezb and the Afghan government. Gulzai however hastened to add that the progress in the talks on the subject was to the extent of ninety per cent. But the Hezb was anxiously trying to involve the rest of the components of the opposition alliance of the Supreme Coordination Council in the proposed power sharing formula with the ruling coalition in Kabul.

The Hezb, he pointed out, was striving to convince her aides to join the Afghan government so that a peaceful and lasting solution could be traced out to the long-standing dispute.

Gulzai said that the HEA would wait for decision of the other opposition parties, expected to be announced within three of four days, following which the Hezb would announced its decision. He however didn't elaborate as to what would be the decision of the HEA if the Coordination Council rejected talks with the government.

The Hezb leader also refuted the reports that a force of more than 10,000 troops of the HEA had entered Kabul. He said this was simply impossible at this stage. He however admitted that roads linking the Hezb-controlled areas with Kabul had been re-opened the facilitate people living on either side.

He said they had been endeavoring to convince the Taleban to form an alliance with them but they deceived the Hezb and themselves marred the peace process. The Hezb, he believed, was not crazy for power but it was attempting to pave way for a broad based set up in Kabul.

The HEA, he said, was against continuation of hostilities and wanted immediate stop to factional fighting. For this purpose, he added, their party would continue efforts to persuade other groups so that peaceful solution was sorted out.

**Pakistan: Leghari Speaks on Afghanistan, ECO**

*BK1605014496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has expressed Pakistan's firm belief in restoring peace in Afghanistan for the rapid development of the economy in the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] region. He said Pakistan and Iran have agreed to work together for achieving peace in that country. He was talking to newsmen on board the special plane which brought him home early this morning after the ECO summit in the Turkmenistan capital, Ashgabat. To a question, he said Afghanistan is neither a power playground for us nor we have any favorites there. Pakistan is only interested in a consensus democratic and stable government in that neighboring country, he added. Referring to the recent opening of the railway link between Iran and Turkmenistan, the president said we are ready to do so with Afghanistan. About the agreement of supply of gas to Pakistan from Turkmenistan, the president said Afghanistan is a signatory of the agreement; he hoped it will follow another agreement of building an oil pipeline. Referring to ECO, he said it is our policy to promote it on the pattern of European Union leaving aside the political side. President Leghari said his talks with leaders of the ECO countries in Ashgabat centered on the development of infrastructural facilities for the promotion of trade and communication links in the region.

**Pakistan: Defense in 'Buyer's Market' Viewed**

*BK1605052696 Islamabad THE NATION in English 15 May 96 p 6*

[Article by Shahwar Junaid: "Defence Equipment: Pakistan in a Buyer's Market"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There appears to be a consensus in Pakistan that national security concerns are not receiving the kind of serious attention and consideration they deserve. Decisions appear to be taken on an ad hoc basis and the public is suspicious that personal considerations are behind a number of procurement decisions that will have an impact on defence preparedness in future. The lack of confidence in the units dealing with security issues is based on the information that is made available to the public through official communiques on the one hand and, on the other hand, commission agents working on behalf of defence equipment manufacturers. These agents are keen to promote different security perceptions so as to discredit, or promote one procurement decision or other in the hope of securing contracts.

A disturbing fact is that many such commission agents are retired armed forces personnel who served at a

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senior level. At one time or other, many of them took decisions on policy matters, served on procurement committees or advised them.

Their subsequent alliances with various producers throws doubt on the objectivity of the recommendations they made while serving. Purchase is easy and often lucrative for those involved in the process while technology transfer is relatively painful and requires time for fruition. It is not surprising, therefore, that indigenous production of defence equipment and transfer of technology has not been a priority in Pakistan.

In 1993, Pakistan's central government expenditure on defence was 26.9 per cent of all government spending. Subsequent currency devaluation has made purchases more expensive in rupee terms. More rupee outlay buys less today. While Pakistan continues to purchase it is interesting to observe that a number of dynamic Asian economies are already exporting intermediate conventional arms, they had insisted on technology transfer as part of purchase deals with industrialised countries over two decades ago. During the 1980s, military scientific bases were upgraded by countries like Indonesia, India, Brazil, Malaysia, Taiwan and the island state of Singapore. Israel has transferred technology to both South Africa and China. Israel and Brazil are producing tanks. Chile and South Africa have been producing aircraft, among other things. Hungary, Romania, Singapore, as well as South Africa, have been selling machine guns and antitank weapons. Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore began exporting small arms some time ago. All these countries have entered the arms market at one level or other.

Collaboration in the development of nuclear capability has been available to a number of countries despite the strong anti- proliferation stance of the nuclear powers. India and a number of Far Eastern countries continue to acquire nuclear technology from countries like Brazil and Canada. The United States has been pressurising producer states to restrict sales of missile technology without success. An interesting situation has been created by the slowdown of defence production in the industrialised countries. The countries seeking nuclear expertise can now take their pick from a number of sources in Eastern Europe, South Africa, Brazil, Korea. Top level German scientists are also in the market for hire since the arms industry in Germany has experienced the deepest cuts in production in Europe. In Europe as a whole, production has been cut by half over the past four years.

At least 26 countries are reported to have on-going missile programmes. Israel has supplied assistance to the South African missile programme in the past. India, Israel and Iraq have been running effective research and development programmes.

They have also developed electronic subsystems that make for accurate delivery . In view of the rising cost of labour and technical expertise in the industrialised countries, there is some likelihood that both production, research and development bases will be shifted to less developed countries where comparable skilled labour is available at a fraction of the cost of labour in the industrialised countries.

The major spenders on military programmes are cutting back and concentrating on selling arms to others. Outlays on defence have decreased in the United States, Europe and Russia but they continue to increase in the Middle East and Asia. Iran and Saudi Arabia have increased expenditure in constant prices by 42.5 per cent and 12.9 per cent, respectively. Between 1992 and 1994, India and Pakistan increased expenditure by 12 per cent and 19.5 per cent respectively. In the case of India, due to technology transfers and development of the indigenous arms industry, the real benefit was probably much greater than that indicated by a percentage increase. The Far Eastern countries are concentrating on relatively hi-tech weaponry. The type of weaponry being bought and the changes required in the defence establishment to absorb them indicate that these countries will be maintaining a high profile in this field although tensions have been minimised through economic cooperation and diplomatic activity in the region. The view of an appropriate level of preparedness for a prosperous country is influenced as much by national pride as it is by need and differs from country to country.

A question that few commentators are willing to address is who is selling what to whom and why. In view of the suffering caused by limited wars and internecine conflict, such information can be extremely embarrassing for vending countries. On the one hand, in international forums, both the major arms-vending countries and the smaller vendors advocate peace and, on the other hand, they sell weapons by the planeload. The requirements of limited wars, that broke out after the collapse of the bipolar global system, led to an increase in the demand for simple weapons.

This demand is being met by countries like Brazil and a number of East European and Far Eastern countries. Brazil produces systems using easily available components and simple technology. Taiwan and Indonesia are budding exporters of arms and Iran has begun to show indigenous armaments in international exhibitions.

The states of the former Soviet Union are a rich source of cheap arms as well as sophisticated technology,

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including nuclear technology. The demand for hi-tech systems tested in the Gulf War remains limited but relatively advanced systems are being purchased by the dynamic economies of the Far East. There is some concern about the possibility of an arms race in the region. The high cost of these systems makes prototypes from Russia and Eastern Europe even more attractive. Switzerland and China are purchasing aircraft from Moscow. The Ukraine has offered aircraft carriers and bombers to China. In its efforts to diversify sources of defence equipment, Pakistan has been investigating the possibilities in South Africa and the Ukraine. Pakistan will probably seek missiles which may fall within the MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime). It would appear that while there is a great deal of talk about peace, a significant amount of hard dealing in arms is taking place.

In this global scenario, a number of realities emerge, dealing in hi-tech defence systems will take place on a preferential basis between the industrialised countries and their proteges. The number of vendors of intermediate and small arms has increased to the extent that it is no longer possible to monitor and control their sale. This has led to the escalation in intensity of conflicts between organised groups and states. Missile and nuclear technology will be available to a number of comparatively less developed countries not only because there has been an increase in the number of vendors but also because it has become clear that the industrialised countries intend to allow some less developed countries to possess this technology and achieve regional power status. Nuclear technology and the means of producing weapons and delivery systems have passed into the international economy controlled by private organisations with the experience and the expertise to set up entire systems. These could be made available outside of any international regulatory system and could escapee the scrutiny of existing regimes controlling nuclear proliferation. The nuclear deterrent has prevented wars between states while organised groups of the militants have altered the status quo in many countries. This market is being fully exploited by new and old vendors of arms.

For countries like Pakistan which have not been able to organise defence production and arrange advantageous technology transfers so far, the situation is not likely to improve with the increase in the number of sources of arms and technology. Alliances between, vendors whether governments or private organisations, and buyers may require exclusivity. For instance, Moscow has refused to supply equipment and technology to Pakistan so far because it has advantageous agreements with India. Pakistan is going to secondary sources these days. All the deals it makes will be like albatrosses around Pakistan's neck unless technology transfer is included in the deals and reliable indigenous defence production capability is enhanced at the same time. So far the establishment has distinguished itself for corruption and not production. According to reports, 22 cases of corruption were detected in the procurement of stores and engineering services by the Defence Production Division during 1992-1993. One case cited raises some questions about authority in procurement matters: it is reported that in June 1992, the Prime Minister ordered that the trucks procured for the forces should henceforth come from the Pakistan Automobile Corporation. Apparently, the design, trials and tests of the locally-produced model had been completed. Nevertheless the Defense Production Division procurement section proceeded to purchase Japanese Isuzu trucks which can be seen racing around Cantonments in Pakistan. Since the matter of non-compliance with the PM's directive was not pursued, it would appear that the local vehicle was not up to the mark and should not have been recommended for purchase anyway. The development of local products needs to be taken seriously by those planning to enter this field. It also means that procurement recommendations should not be made lightly.

In any case, there should be public clarifications of such matters and when key departments actually produce something, their achievements should be publicised. There does not appear to be any point in publicising mere purchases.

**Pakistan: Foreign Secretary Leaves for Moscow**

*BK1605050896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign secretary, Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh, has gone to Moscow via Frankfurt on a two-day visit to the Russian Federation. He will be having talks in Moscow with Russian leaders. His visit precedes the official visit of the prime minister scheduled this year.

**Pakistan: Russian Mi-17's Arrive Prior to Foreign Secretary's Visit**

*BK1505131796 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 15 May 96 p 12*

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD: Just forty-eight hours before Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh leaves for Moscow, three brand new Russian choppers reached Pakistan for their induction into Army Aviation fleet.

Pakistan Army bought 12 Mi-17 helicopters from Russia some time back, but the first batch of three helis arrived

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here on Tuesday. "These are non-lethal helis, as Russia has been refusing Pakistan to provide any kind of lethal equipment," said official sources, who confirmed arrival of three choppers from Astrakhan, a city located on the brink of Caspian sea. The remaining choppers will reach Pakistan in the batch of three each after every quarter, and the whole lot will be delivered by the end of current year.

"Russia should now consider opening up its defence relations with Pakistan by agreeing to sell lethal equipment like Su-27 and other armament," said an official privy to the whole development.

All the Russian Mi-17s, said the sources, will be used for transport purposes, as Russia has not provided any "lethal system" with them. However, Pakistan Army on its own can equip them with lethal weapons.

Official sources said, Pakistani nation hoped that new relationship would emerge between Pakistan and Russia with the two-day visit to Moscow by Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh.

**Pakistan: Minister Says Indian Agencies Behind Acts of Terrorism**

*BK1605051296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The interior minister, Mr. Nasirullah Khan Babar, has said the security agencies are keeping strict vigilance on the movement of people coming from India especially through Samghota Express. He told newsmen in Islamabad yesterday that these agencies have sufficient evidence of involvement of Indian intelligence agencies in various acts of terrorism in Pakistan. About the situation in Karachi, he said people were cooperating with the government to eliminate the terrorist elements.

**Pakistan: India's BJP Leadership Style Viewed**

*BK1505123096 Islamabad THE NATION in English 15 May 96 p 6*

[Editorial: "India's Post-Election Scenario"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The hung parliament produced by the Indian elections has resulted in uncertainty about the shape of the new government to be inducted in New Delhi. Jockeying for positions of advantage between the rival contenders is still going on and the outcome remains confused. There are two main groupings that have emerged in the post-election scenario: parties subscribing to India's traditional so-called secular outlook, and the Hindu nationalist BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]-led forces. The strategy of the first group has been to try and keep the BJP out of power, fearing that the extremist Hindutva [Hinduism] ideology of the BJP will exacerbate tensions on communal and caste lines. But the difficulty being faced by the secular forces is that their own internal differences are confronting the formation of a credible coalition with serious obstacles. Such a coalition would be composed of the defeated Congress (I) and the center-left NF-LF [National Front-Left Front] alliance. But the Janata Party and the CPI [Communist Party of India] (Marxist), two main components of the NF-LF alliance, are both opposed to cooperation with Congress (I) for the purposes of forming a government. The Janata aversion goes back to its origins. Most of its leading lights are former Congress dissidents. The CPI (M), led by long-serving West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu is believed to be reluctant to join any governing coalition of which Congress (I) would be a major force. Narasimha Rao, who led the Congress (I) to its worst ever defeat, has managed to salvage his party from a debilitating internal struggle in the aftermath of the electoral debacle, winning in the process a vote of confidence in his continued leadership and thereby ensuring against any immediate split. However, this endorsement is hardly shared by his potential coalition allies, the Janata Dal and the CPI (M). That has left the secular camp without a credible potential leader and therefore made its chances of forming the government, already weakened by the arithmetic in the new parliament, that much bleaker. Against the more than 140 seats won by Congress (I) and the about 111 won by the NF-LF alliance, totalling 250 plus, to which could conceivably be added the support of some regions parties and independents, is counter-posed the almost 200 seats commanded by the BJP and its allies. Its problem is that its appeal is based on high caste Hindu religious fundamentalism and therefore unattractive to either secular minded regional parties or independents, since the mythology of secularism to which the Indian polity has been wedded for so long, still exercises considerable sway over the minds of most shades of politicians. Despite their leader and candidate for Prime Ministership, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's relatively moderate image, selling BJP as a reformed moderate formation is an uphill task.

The prospects therefore, are those of an unstable government, no matter which side eventually succeeds in garnering sufficient strength. Although there is little prospect of a change in Pakistan-India relations no matter which coalition rules, the thought of the Hindu fundamentalist party BJP in power is deeply troubling because of its implications for the Muslims in India generally, and in Kashmir in particular. The BJP is known to harbour blood curdling ideas on how to 'deal' with what it calls 'pampered minorities' such as the Muslims.

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Its aggressive Hindu nationalism is bound to exacerbate tensions in an already tense South Asia.

**Pakistan: Azad Kashmir President Gives Reasons for Resignation**

*BK1505130496 Islamabad THE NATION in English 15 May 96 p 6*

[Editorial: "Sikander's Alibi"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Giving reasons for his surprise resignation, Azad Kashmir President Sardar Sikander Hayat has made the self-righteous assertion that he has done it to "facilitate the democratic process". Everything will now proceed according to the constitutional procedure, he assured newsmen whom he was trying to convince that his stepping down from office two months ahead of the scheduled polls was a "service to democracy", as it would resolve the controversy, unnecessarily projected by the Federal government, regarding the time frame of the next elections in Azad Kashmir. The "junior" Sardar who has quite recently abdicated his claim for the "First warrior's" job, and willy nilly made peace with his "senior", has out of the blue emerged as a crusader for democratic norms and fair play in politics. Nonetheless, he revealed his real motive for what could only be described as a "pre-emptive strike" when he said he would not allow himself to be "pushed to the wall" or trapped in a "blind alley" and had the right to keep his options open. What he really meant was that he wanted to secure his re-election as President before the dissolution of the present Legislative Assembly, and not let his political future be held to ransom by unknown variables likely to affect the outcome of the next Assembly polls in Azad Kashmir. The Azad Kashmir President is elected by an electoral college comprising the Legislative Assembly and the AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] Council, but apparently there is a constitutional lacuna regarding the timing of the Presidential election. The question as to who should the next President, the incumbent legislators or the newly-elected ones, has been a bone of contention between Islamabad and the Qayyum [Azad Kashmir prime minister's] government.

For obvious reasons, Sardar Qayyam has been insisting on holding the presidential poll there before the Assembly elections, while the Bhutto government's "viceorys" for Azad Kashmir, hoping to turn the tables on the Muslim Conference (MC) in the forthcoming polls, have taken the plea that an Assembly cannot be empowered to elect the President twice. Now that Sikander Hayat has been endorsed as the official MC candidate for the Presidency, he has every reason to turn his guns on Islamabad, accusing the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] of "foul play". Ironically, he himself had raised the banner of revolt against Sardar Qayyum, publicly charging his government with "mismanagement and corruption", in Particular Qayyum's arbitrary style of functioning, squandering of public funds, and letting his son and heir-apparent establish a "parallel government'. He was more than willing to play ball with "hawks" in the Bhutto establishment trying to stage a coup against Sardar Qayyum. So tempting is the chance to enjoy the perks and trapping of high office that politicians suffer no qualms of conscience while staging a volte-face a la Sikander Hayat and yet have the audacity to deliver sermons on the ethics of political behavior. How would Islamabad respond to the move, likely to be seen as a "provocation", is a little premature to predict. But if better sense prevails, and the "more loyal than the king" category of advisers are not allowed to sell an adventurist course, Prime Minister Bhutto would be well advised to leave Azad Kashmir politics alone and let the Peoples Party in Azad Kashmir stand on its own feet to settle scores with the Muslim Conference. A single false move in Azad Kashmir at this juncture when we are trying to tell the world that the Indians are staging a farcical election in Held Kashmir, would hurt our cause beyond repair.

**Pakistan: Official Comments on Foreign Investment, Industrial Zones**

*BK1505133596 Karachi DAWN in English 15 May 96 pp 19, 21*

[Report by Ihtashamul Haque]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, May 14 — Pakistan has attracted 640 million dollars foreign direct investment during the first nine months of the current financial year.

"During July to March 96, the foreign direct investment has doubled compared to 320 million dollars during the same period of 1994-95," claimed Syed Muhibullah Shah, Secretary Board of Investment (BOI).

Speaking at a news conference here on Tuesday after the BOI Board meeting which was presided by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, he said there has been a spectacular increase in the foreign direct investment which was likely to end up and one billion dollars in 1995-96.

He said although no formal target has been fixed for next year, the government expected to have more than one billion dollars investment in the next financial next year. "It could be quite substantial next year".

Mr Shah pointed out that this foreign direct investment flow has improved over the last decade when there used to be only 100 to 130 million dollars annual foreign investment in Pakistan. This, he said, was possible due

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to various incentives given by the present government that the foreign investors were preferring to invest in Pakistan.

However, the BOI secretary conceded that there has been a reduction in the portfolio investment during the first nine months of the current year. "Portfolio investment has not picked up compared to last year," he said.

He said that Board of Directors of the BOI had also decided to offer concessions to Pakistan shipping industry. He said currently 92 percent cargo handling was being done by the foreign companies. Pakistan, he pointed out was spending 1.28 billion dollars annually to import various things through foreign companies vessels. However, he said a committee has been appointed to look into other issues and offer various incentives to the owners of the local vessels.

Moreover, Mr Shah pointed out that it was decided to remove anomalies between different departments of customs with a view to support the owners of local vessels.

"There is another decision taken by the Board is that BOI will be put on Internet for investors, bankers executives and major multinationals", he said adding that there will be a Pakistan page providing all financial and investment data to more than 3000 executives and fund mangers worldwide.

"This decision of putting BOI on Internet will project Pakistan very effectively", Mr Shah said.

He said this was further decided to revised policy package to encourage investment in the chemical industry. In this regard he pointed out interministerial conflict will be removed such as duty drawback structure.

"Now there will be a differentiation between the import of chemical plant equipment and the machinery and now the word plant has been taken away to exempt the equipment and the machinery from the duty," he added.

He said today it was the 10th meeting of the BOI board in which number of other decisions were also taken to support the country's variety of industries.

Mr Shah said that Pakistan has successfully convinced the Consolidated Electric Power Asia (CEPA) to train 100 Pakistanis for which the government will provide the premises and other facilities. However, he said the boarding and lodging will be provided by the CEPA and after their training, it will also provide them jobs accordingly.

He said the BOI was organising to hold CASA [Central Asia-South Asia] economic summit in Pakistan in 1997 which will be participated by heads of state of the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] countries along with 1000 business leaders of the world. He said that the World Economic Forum of Switzerland was providing all support to organise this summit which will be first of its kind in Asia.

"We would also be organising another conference next year of OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] chambers of commerce and industry to bring together private sector of different countries," he said. The BOI Secretary defended his earlier decision of creating 12 Special Industrial Zones (SIZs) which were disapproved by the government on the pressure of the IMF. "The package we had made for SIZs attracted 2 billion dollars investment which was simply unprecedented," he said adding that EPZ [export processing zone] which was operating for the last 15 year could only attract 200 million dollars investment.

He told a reporter that the BOI had not given up the idea of such SIZs and said it would continue to try to convince the high-ups to allow the functioning of SIZs in Pakistan because they aimed at attracting huge foreign investment.

To a question, he said the most of the foreign investment came in the fields of petroleum, power, gas, chemicals, automobiles and food. The USA was the major investors followed by Britain, Japan, UAE [United Arab Emirates] and Hong Kong.

Answering a question, Mr Shah said that 30 per cent of the Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) have not been working satisfactorily. The rest of the MOUs, he said were working satisfactorily, bringing substantial investment in Pakistan.

**Pakistan: Peshawar Authorities To Ban Afghan Refugees in Muharram**

*LD1505223196 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Afghan refugees will be banned from entering Peshawar city [in Pakistan] during the month of Muharram al-Haram [starting 19 May]. Quoting security sources in Peshawar, [word indistinct] newspaper has reported that Peshawar city police will ban the refugees from entering into the city during the month of Muharram al-Haram as a measure to prevent a possible terrorist or subversive act.

The source added that the refugees will be arrested by government officials if they leave their camps during this month and try to enter the city. Wasim Afzal Khan, a security official in Peshawar, told correspondents that

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shops and work places would be closed for five days during the month of Muharram.

## Sri Lanka

### Sri Lanka: Security Forces Take 'Complete Control' of Jaffna Peninsula

*BK1605082096 Hong Kong AFP in English 0810 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, May 16 (AFP) — Sri Lankan Government forces on Thursday took virtually complete control of the northern peninsula of Jaffna by taking a strategic port from Tamil Tiger guerrillas, officials said.

Infantry troops moved into Vadamarchchi, the final strip of land held by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on Jaffna peninsula, after a one day operation, the sources said.

At least one soldier was killed and several others suffered minor injuries in mine explosions but there was no face-to-face fighting as the guerrillas fled ahead of the army advance, a military spokesman said.

"At least 50,000 civilians in Vadamarchchi have now been liberated by our troops," the spokesman said adding that air force Mi-24 helicopter gun ships had pounded several rebel bases.

There were no immediate reports of rebel casualties.

The spokesman said the army took the small pier of Point Pedro at 0500 GMT. The pier had served as the main supply line for the LTTE in the Jaffna peninsula.

The army took Jaffna town in December and mounted another offensive on April 19 to capture the south-eastern sector of the peninsula, leaving only Vadamarachchi in the northeast in Tiger hands.

Defence sources said the guerrillas had moved most of their heavy equipment from Vadamarachchi anticipating a fresh onslaught.

The LTTE has been leading a protracted campaign for independence in the island's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated. More than 50,000 people have died in the fighting since 1972.

### Sri Lanka: Security Forces Take More Tiger Territory in Jaffna

*BK1605054996 Hong Kong AFP in English 0527 GMT 16 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, May 15 (AFP) — Sri Lankan security forces Thursday established virtual dominance over the entire northern peninsula of Jaffna after driving out Tamil Tiger guerrillas, official sources here said.

Infantry troops moved into the Vadamarchchi sector, the final strip of land held by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the Jaffna peninsula after an operation begun Wednesday, the sources said.

"The Tigers have fled without offering any resistance," a military source here said. "But we are moving slowly to avoid getting caught in mine attacks and booby-trapped houses."

The sources said that the army was just a short distance away from the small pier of Point Pedro which had served as the main supply line for the LTTE in the Jaffna peninsula earlier.

The army took the town of Jaffna in December and mounted another offensive April 19 to capture the south-eastern sector of the Jaffna peninsula leaving only the north-eastern area of Vadamarachchi with the Tigers.

Defence sources said that the guerrillas had moved most of their heavy equipment from Vadamarachchi anticipating a fresh onslaught.

The LTTE has been leading a protracted campaign for independence in the island's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated. More than 50,000 people have died in the fighting since 1972.

### Sri Lanka: Tamil Groups Seek Indian Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Help

*BK1505121896 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 15 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Five Sri Lankan Tamil groups have urged the newly elected chief minister of India's Tamil Nadu state to support the demand for a political solution to the ethnic conflict. The PRESS TRUST OF INDIA quoted the group as telling Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi that they are sure that he would continue to support the suffering people in the north. The group said that they hope that Mr. Karunanidhi would stress the need for a political solution to the ethnic problem. The signatories to the statement included the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, the Eelam People's Democratic Party, the People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam, the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization, and the Eelam Revolutionary Organizers [preceding name as heard].

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